



September 15, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
1021 O Street, Room 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 888 (Calderon) California Safe Homes grant program— REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

Megafire Action is writing in strong support of Assembly Bill 888 (Calderon), which is on your desk for signature. Megafire Action is a nonprofit organization committed to ending the megafire crisis through a holistic approach to land management, wildfire response, and community resilience. AB 888 would establish a targeted, accountable grant program to scale cost-effective home hardening and defensible space, align with Safer from Wildfires, prioritize low-income households and community projects, and reduce losses while improving insurability. We respectfully request your signature on this legislation.

AB 888 prioritizes the upgrades that matter most for preventing ember-driven home ignitions by focusing first on replacement of non-compliant roofs and the creation of a noncombustible five-foot perimeter around structures, in alignment with the Department of Insurance's Safer from Wildfires framework. By concentrating on these proven measures, the program will measurably reduce ignition pathways, protect lives and property, and, critically, help homeowners qualify for premium credits where insurers recognize verifiable risk reductions.

The bill also advances equity and market stability by targeting individual grants to low-income households living in ZIP Codes that overlap High or Very High Fire

Hazard Severity Zones and by enabling qualifying cities, counties, and special districts to undertake community-scale mitigation that reduces conflagration risk for entire neighborhoods.

AB 888 builds accountability into the program from the start. Grantees must document completed work and, where applicable, show whether they qualified for insurer mitigation incentives after upgrades. This will be a useful mechanism for understanding consumer challenges in obtaining rate reductions after completing qualified mitigation work. The California FAIR Plan must report annually on policyholder uptake of mitigation rating factors, and the department must publish a biennial performance report beginning January 1, 2027, detailing investments, geographic distribution, and recommendations for improvement. These feedback loops will enable the Legislature to refine and scale what works.

As the Administration weighs the cost of this legislation against other priorities, we would note the strong return on investment from home-hardening activities. Once a fire breaches the wildland–urban interface, it can race structure-to-structure on embers, radiant heat, and direct flame contact—as recent Los Angeles fires have shown—so reducing vulnerability in the built environment is essential to reducing the soaring costs of wildfire disasters and will also help ease the insurance crisis in high-risk regions. Recent analyses further estimate a benefit-cost ratio of about 4:1 for constructing to International Wildland–Urban Interface Code standards—the kind of cost-effective, evidence-based mitigation AB 888 is designed to scale.¹

Megafire Action stands ready to support its implementation in any way we can and we respectfully request your signature on this bill. For questions or further discussion, please contact Eric Horne at eric@megafireaction.org.

Sincerely,

¹ 2019 NIBS Mitigation Saves report <https://www.nibs.org/projects/natural-hazard-mitigation-saves-2019-report>



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cc: Grant Mack, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of Governor
Newsom
Brady Borcharding, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of
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