

Assemblyman Frank Bigelow
5th Assembly District
California State Capitol, 4116
Sacramento, CA 95814
P: 916-319-2005 | F: 916-319-2105



Hello,

Assemblyman Frank Bigelow (R- O'Neals) and Assemblyman Bob Wieckowski (D-Fremont) have Joint Authored AB 350, The Forest Fire Prevention Exemption Act of 2013. This bipartisan effort comes at a critical time; forests are overgrown, the threat of wild fire is prevalent and the consequences could be catastrophic for wildlife, our ecosystems and Californians. AB 350 simply cuts the red tape to allow private forest land owners to do the much-needed work of clearing out deadwood, underbrush and other highly flammable materials that turn healthy forest fires disastrous.

According to the United States Forest Service, 550,000 acres of private timberland is still over-stocked and in need of thinning. Since the inception of the FFPE 10 years ago, only 8,000 acres of private forest land have been thinned to reduce the threat of rampant wild fires. While this is a step in the right direction, there is still much more that needs to be done.

Currently, the Forest Fire Prevention Exemption (FFPE) in the Timber Harvest Plan (THP) allows trees less than 18 inches at stump diameter to be cleared and in special circumstances trees less than 24 inches in stump diameter without forcing the landowner to spend upwards of \$40,000 to file a THP. Unfortunately, the current FFPE exemption has been under-utilized and adequate fire thinning has not been accomplished in California.

AB 350 would simply increase the diameter of the stump size under the FFPE exemption. Under AB 350, trees with a 28 inch stump diameter would qualify under the FFPE in most instances, and 34 inches where it is necessary to achieve the state's fuel reduction goals.

I am writing because I believe your organization and its members could benefit from this legislation, and I invite you to join our efforts in supporting our bill. Please find the fact sheet and language of the bill enclosed, along with a sample support letter.

Assemblyman Bigelow and Assemblyman Wieckowski are looking forward to working with your organizations to help private forest land owners, the environment and California industry with this legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank Bigelow".

Assemblyman Frank Bigelow
Assemblyman, 5th Assembly District