

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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JAMES S. MITRISIN
Clerk of the Board



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January 7, 2014

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Room 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

In July 2011 the Legislature imposed a \$150 Fire Prevention Fee on every habitable structure in a State Responsibility Area (SRA) through ABX1 29. With approximately 51,000 parcels in the SRA, this fee has had a severe impact on the County of El Dorado. Even at the discounted rate of \$115, the fee is excessively burdensome to citizens, and has all but guaranteed that financially struggling local fire districts will never again achieve voter or landowner approval new special taxes or assessments to sustain operations. Furthermore, rural citizens have not received any additional benefits since the imposition of the fee.

As you know, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) recently forecast a \$5.6 billion General Fund reserve at the end of the 2014-15 fiscal year. The LAO further projects that operating surpluses will grow at a rate of between \$1 billion and \$3 billion each year between fiscal years 2014-15 and 2017-18.

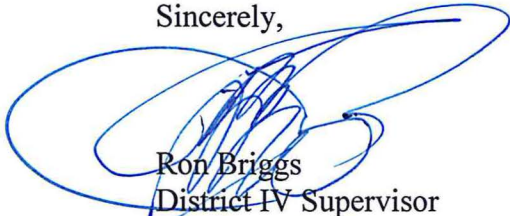
AB X1 29 contained a provision which would allow discontinuance of the fee in a given fiscal year if sufficient funds were available to fund fire prevention activities. The bill now codified as Public Resources Code § 4213(d) states: "Commencing with the 2012-13 fiscal year, if in any given fiscal year there are sufficient amounts of money in the State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fund created pursuant to Section 4214 to finance the costs of the programs under subdivision (d) of Section 4214 for that fiscal year, the fee may not be collected that fiscal year."

With a projected \$5.6 billion dollar reserve projected to grow at least \$1 billion annually for the next several years, we hope you agree that the State has sufficient resources to cover the fire prevention activities it funded prior to the imposition of the SRA fee. The Board of Supervisors for the County of El Dorado requests that you consider legislation which would immediately suspend the collection of the SRA fee.

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.
January 7, 2014
Page 2

Thank you for considering this request. Should you or your staff have any questions about this proposal or about the impact of the SRA fee on the County of El Dorado, please contact Chief Administrative Officer Terri Daly at (530) 621-5530.

Sincerely,



Ron Briggs
District IV Supervisor
County of El Dorado

cc: The Honorable Ted Gaines, Senator, First Senate District
The Honorable Beth Gaines, Assembly Member, Sixth Assembly District
The Honorable Frank Bigelow, Assembly Member, Fifth Assembly District
The Honorable George Runner, State Board of Equalization, Second District
The Honorable Darrell Steinberg, Senate President pro Tem
The Honorable John A. Pérez, Speaker of the Assembly
Members, California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection