

## CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1075 (Bryan)

As Amended June 27, 2025

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Requires the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to develop regulations that prohibit private fire prevention resources from connecting their equipment to public water sources, unless approved by the authority with jurisdiction over an active fire incident and unless the equipment includes a backflow device.

**Senate Amendments**

- 1) Requires the drafted regulations prohibit connecting private fire prevention resources without a backflow prevention device.
- 2) Clarifies the regulations regarding the use of equipment used by privately contracted fire prevention resources during an active fire incident shall not alter, impair, or interfere with the authority of a community water system to operate a water distribution system.

**COMMENTS**

*Background:* Private firefighting services have become increasingly prominent—and controversial—in California's wildfire response, particularly in affluent communities. Often hired by insurance providers or wealthy individuals, these companies deploy crews to protect high-value properties by applying fire retardants, clearing brush, and creating defensible space. While some local governments have contracted with private firms for additional firefighting capacity, the practice remains primarily associated with private property protection, raising questions about equity in disaster response. Insurers argue that using private firefighters helps reduce overall wildfire losses and keeps insurance companies in the California market.

The backlash against private firefighting has intensified following the 2025 Palisades and Eaton wildfires. Reports of a Los Angeles millionaire offering to pay "any amount" for private crews to protect his home, alongside a billionaire developer hiring private firefighters to safeguard a luxury shopping mall, have fueled public frustration. However, this debate isn't new—past wildfires saw similar outrage when celebrities made headlines for employing private teams to protect their homes. Critics argue these services exacerbate inequalities, ensuring that those who can afford premium insurance or direct contracts receive enhanced protection while lower-income communities must rely on overstretched public resources.

Another growing concern is private crews' access to public infrastructure, particularly water. Reports of private teams tapping into municipal hydrants have raised questions about whether they are diverting resources needed by public fire departments. In extreme cases, some private crews have been accused of interfering with official operations, further complicating coordination efforts.

*Wildfires:* Wildfires are a severe and growing threat to lives, property, and infrastructure in California. According to data from CAL FIRE, 15 of California's 20 most destructive fires have occurred in the past decade. Collectively, these most recent fires have resulted in 180 deaths and the loss of 57,483 structures (homes, outbuildings, and commercial properties). While fewer

wildfires threatened California in 2023 due to the increased number of weather events and atmospheric rivers, the vegetative growth from the significant rainfall contributed to devastating wildfires in 2024 and 2025.

In 2024, the Park Fire became the fourth-largest fire in California's history. Despite aggressive initial attack suppression efforts, the fire rapidly expanded, ultimately consuming 429,603 acres across Butte and Tehama counties. The Park Fire led to the destruction of 709 structures and damage to 54 others, prompting widespread evacuations and the temporary closure of Lassen Volcanic National Park.

In January 2025, Los Angeles County experienced the second and third most destructive fires in California history: the Palisades Fire and Eaton Fire. The Eaton Fire became the second most destructive fire in California history after destroying 9,418 buildings, 1,074 structures damaged, and 17 confirmed civilian fatalities. The Palisades Fire is the third most destructive fire in state history, with 6,837 structures destroyed, 973 structures damaged, and 12 confirmed civilian fatalities. According to the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, as published in their report, *Impact of 2025 Los Angeles Wildfires and Comparative Study*, the early 2025 Los Angeles wildfires resulted in property damages estimated between \$28.0 billion and \$53.8 billion and estimated lost economic output ranging from \$4.6 billion to \$8.9 billion between the years 2025 and 2029.

*Backflow Prevention Device:* A backflow prevention device protects water systems from contamination or pollution by stopping water from flowing in the incorrect, or reverse, direction due to pressure or suction.

### **According to the Author**

"AB 1075 would protect municipal water systems by prohibiting private firefighters from hooking up to public water sources. During the Palisades and Eaton Fires, LA residents were asked to limit their water usage to minimize demands on water systems. Similarly, private firefighters working for a select few individuals should limit their reliance on these systems. Public fire hydrants are a public good and we must preserve them for use by official fire departments during a fire incident."

### **Arguments in Support**

According to the California Professional Firefighters (CPF), "During the Palisades and Eaton Fires there were significant reports of privately contracted private fire prevention resources operating across Los Angeles County. Some of these reports indicated that they were utilizing public water systems to support their efforts. Privately contracted private fire prevention resources hooking up to hydrants and other public water sources could impact the ability for professional firefighters to complete their mission of protecting life and property. Moreover, firefighting is a public good delivered by public agency firefighters and the public water system is designed to support the public good when firefighters are responding to an emergency. With this in mind, it is critical that we update the existing regulations governing these resources to prohibit the use of public water systems for privately contracted private fire prevention resources operating on an active fire incident. Updating the current law with this adjustment is critical to ensure that public water systems are maintained for California's professional firefighters."

### **Arguments in Opposition**

None on file.

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

The Senate Committee on Appropriations, under Senate Rule 28.8, determined the state cost of this bill is not significant and sent this bill directly to the Senate Floor without a committee hearing.

**VOTES:****ASM EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: 6-1-0**

**YES:** Ransom, Hadwick, Arambula, Bains, Bennett, Calderon

**NO:** DeMaio

**ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 14-0-0**

**YES:** Bryan, Alanis, Connolly, Ellis, Flora, Garcia, Haney, Hoover, Kalra, Muratsuchi, Pellerin, Schultz, Wicks, Zbur

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0**

**YES:** Wicks, Sanchez, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

**ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-2-2**

**YES:** Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

**NO:** DeMaio, Gallagher

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Petrie-Norris, Stefani

**UPDATED**

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