
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1934 (Bennett) - State Fire Marshal: home hardening certification program implementation plan

Version: June 9, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: E.M. 9 - 0, N.R. & W. 7 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Janelle Miyashiro

Bill Summary: AB 1934 directs the Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee (WMAC) within the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) to develop an implementation plan for a home hardening certification program by January 1, 2028.

Fiscal Impact: The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) reports costs of approximately \$6.9 million in year one, \$12.3 million in year two, \$17 million in year three, \$19.2 million in year four, and \$20.1 million in year five and ongoing to establish and implement the certification program (General Fund).

Background: The WMAC provides a forum for the OSFM, representatives of industry, state agencies, the fire service, and other stakeholders to address wildfire preparedness and mitigation issues of statewide concern, share best practices, seek comments and technical input on specific programs, and inform local agencies and the public of applicable new laws and regulations. WMAC acts in an advisory capacity on the programs and activities of the OSFM's Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division.

Proposed Law:

- By January 1, 2028, requires the OSFM's WMAC to develop an implementation plan for a home hardening certification program that identifies home hardening measures, including defensible space, that can be voluntarily implemented during renovation or property improvement projects to substantially reduce the risk of loss during a fire and bring existing building stock into alignment with the provisions adopted in the California Building Standards Code.
- In developing the program, requires the WMAC to provide recommendations that include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Multiple tiers of home hardening certification with at least one tier defined as ember resistant.
 - Identifying the qualifications necessary for individuals tasked with inspecting a home and confirming its compliance with the home hardening standards established in the implementation plan for the home hardening certification program.
 - The length of time that a certification is valid.

- By January 1, 2028, requires the WMAC to provide a report to the applicable legislative policy committees on its findings and recommendations.
- By January 1, 2029, requires the OSFM to establish and implement the certification program consistent with the recommendations made by the WMAC.

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