Office of Senate Floor Analyses
(916) 651-4171

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Bill No: SB 492
Author: Becker (D) and Petrie-Norris (D), et al.
Amended: 8/29/26
Vote: 27 - Urgency

SENATE HOUSING COMMITTEE: 9-1, 1/6/26
AYES: Wahab, Arreguín, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cortese, Durazo, Grayson, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla
NOES: Seyarto
NO VOTE RECORDED: Reyes

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 5-2, 1/22/26
AYES: Caballero, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab
NOES: Seyarto, Dahle

SENATE FLOOR: 30-9, 1/27/26
AYES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
NOES: Alvarado-Gil, Choi, Dahle, Grove, Jones, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Seyarto, Valladares
NO VOTE RECORDED: Strickland

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: Passed, 9/1/26

SUBJECT: Wildfire

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This is an urgency bill that includes various provisions related to addressing wildfire prevention and preparedness, processes for addressing costs from utility equipment-ignited fires, revising requirements related to executive compensation for electrical corporations, among others. This bill reflects the negotiated deal between the leadership of both houses and the Governor announced on Saturday, August 29th.

Assembly Amendments delete the previous contents of this bill related to Youth Housing Bond and replace with the current contents of this bill related to wildfires.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

1) Establishes that private property may be taken or damaged for a public use only when just compensation, ascertained by a jury unless waived, has first been paid to, or into court for, the owner.[1] (California Constitution, Article I, §19)

2) Requires that a statute that limits the right of access to the meetings of public bodies or the writings of public officials and agencies be adopted with findings demonstrating the interest protected by the limitation and the need for protecting that interest. (Article I, §3 of the California Constitution)

3) Establishes the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) with regulatory authority over public utilities, including electrical corporations. (Article XII of the California Constitution)

4) Establishes the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (otherwise known as Cal FIRE) in the Natural Resources Agency (NRA) and requires Cal FIRE to coordinate programs of fire protection and fire prevention, among others. (Public Resources Code §700 *et seq.*)

5) Creates the Department of Insurance (DOI), headed by the Insurance Commissioner, and prescribes their powers and duties. Requires, on or before April 1, 2026, and every two years thereafter, an admitted insurer with written California premiums totaling $12 million or more to submit a report to the Insurance Commissioner on its residential property experience data for the previous two years for policies written in California. Requires this information

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[1] This section includes requirements for the exercise of eminent domain; the taking of private property for public use and has been held by the California Supreme Court to require just compensation when a property has been damaged by a public improvement project, known as inverse condemnation. (*Reardon v. San Francisco* (1885) 66 Cal. 492, 501). The courts have further held that the section is applicable to privately-owned public utilities, particularly electrical corporations. (*Gay Law Students Association v. Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Co.* (1979) 23 Cal.3d 458, 469), and (*Barham v. Southern California Edison Company* (1999) 74 Cal. App 4th 744).

submitted to the commissioner to be confidential, exempt from the California Public Records Act, and not subject to subpoena. (Insurance Code §§929 and 929.1)

6) Establishes the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (OEIS) within the NRA which, as of July 1, 2021, subsumed the Wildfire Safety Division responsibilities at the CPUC, including to review the wildfire mitigation plans (WMPs) of electrical corporations and to issue a safety certificate pursuant to requirements in statute. (Government Code §§15740 *et seq.* and 15475.6, Public Utilities Code (PUC) §§326, 8385, 8389)

7) Requires Cal FIRE to annually provide to the Legislature a report detailing Cal FIRE's fire prevention efforts and annually post on its internet website information regarding hazardous fuel reduction and vegetation management projects funded or conducted by the department. (Public Resources Code (PRC) §4137)

8) Requires the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force, including the NRA and Cal FIRE, among others, to develop a comprehensive implementation strategy to track and ensure the achievement of the goals and key actions identified in California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. (PRC §4771)

9) Establishes the Wildfire Fund to pay eligible claims arising from a covered wildfire ignited by, or settled by, participating electrical corporations. Requires the CPUC to direct an electrical corporation participating in the Wildfire Fund to collect a nonbypassable charge from the electrical corporation's ratepayers to support the Wildfire Fund through 2035. (PUC §§3281 *et seq.*)

10) Establishes the Continuation Account in the Wildfire Fund, to be administered by the Wildfire Fund Administrator, and continuously appropriates moneys in the Continuation Account for purposes of payment of eligible claims arising from wildfires ignited on or after September 19, 2025. Authorizes the administrator, on or after the date the CPUC provides notification that all large electrical corporations elect to participate in the Continuation Account, but not later than December 31, 2028, to determine if annual contributions from large electrical corporations are needed to enable the Continuation Account to fund the timely payment of eligible claims. Requires the CPUC, within 15 days of receiving notification from the administrator that additional annual contributions are required, to initiate a rulemaking proceeding to consider using its authority to require the large electrical corporations to collect a nonbypassable charge from ratepayers to support the Continuation Account,

including the payment of any bond issued to support the Continuation Account. Authorizes the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to issue bonds, in an aggregate amount up to $9 billion to support the Continuation Account. Requires, if the CPUC imposes the nonbypassable charge to support the Continuation Account, the large electrical corporations, from calendar years 2029 to 2045, inclusive, to provide to the administrator their annual contributions for the Continuation Account. (PUC §3298 *et seq*.)

11) Requires revenues and bond proceeds received by the DWR to be deposited in the DWR Charge Fund and continuously appropriates the moneys in the DWR Charge Fund to the DWR for specified purposes, including transfers to the Wildfire Fund and payment of the bonds. (Water Code §80500 *et seq*.)

12) Regulates, among other things, fee agreements, legal advertising and referral services, the sale of financial products to a client, and unlawful solicitation. (Business and Professions Code §6000 *et seq.*)

13) Establishes the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, which requires, with specified exceptions, that all meetings of a state body be open and public and all persons be permitted to attend. Authorizes certain state bodies to hold closed session meetings for certain purposes, including authorizing the governing board or advisory panel of the California Earthquake Authority (CEA) to hold closed sessions when addressing specified issues. (Government Code §8880.20 *et seq*. and Insurance Code §10089.5 *et seq*.)

14) Establishes the California Public Records Act which requires a public agency, defined to mean a state or local agency, to make its public records available for public inspection and to make copies available upon request and the payment of a fee, unless the public records are exempt from disclosure. (Government Code §7920 *et seq,*)

This bill:

1) Relevant to wildfire prevention and preparedness:

   a) Requires Cal FIRE, on or before July 1, 2029, in consultation with the DOI, the NRA, the Office of Emergency Services (OES), and other relevant departments, to develop standards for state and local agencies to aggregate and make available data related to parcel-, neighborhood, and community-level wildfire risk for the purpose of enabling a wildfire data sharing platform. Requires Cal FIRE to incorporate those data standards into community wildfire risk reduction metrics.

b) Authorizes the DOI to provide information submitted to Cal FIRE, including the residential property experience data for the previous two years for policies written in California, to researchers and government agencies for the purpose of evaluating California wildfire risk, insurance protection gaps, or wildfire risk mitigation. Requires any published data product collected that is provided to a researcher or government agency to be anonymized and aggregated sufficiently to avoid identification of individual company losses, claims data, or information on confidential business practices, as specified, and prohibits subsequent reports from identifying an individual respondent or insurer.
c) Repeals requirements on Cal FIRE to annually provide to the Legislature a report detailing the department's fire prevention efforts, and instead requires Cal FIRE, on or before March 1 of each year, to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature on the detailed efforts made in California towards wildfire prevention and community preparedness.
d) Requires, on or before July 1, 2027, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary of the NRA, in consultation with the State Fire Marshal, the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force, the Wildfire County Coordinator Program, and the State Hazard Mitigation Officer to prepare a comprehensive statewide community wildfire preparedness strategy. Requires the State Fire Marshal to support communities in the development of optional county-level community wildfire protection plans that align with the community wildfire preparedness strategy. Requires a local entity, in order to receive state funding to implement its community wildfire protection plan, to provide annual updates and progress on its efforts to meet the goals of its plan.

2) Relevant to the creation of a California Wildfire Relief Fast-Pay Program:

a) Creates the California Wildfire Relief Fast-Pay Program and requires the California Catastrophe Response Council to appoint a fast-pay administrator to administer the fast-pay program.
b) Requires, within 180 days of the effective date of this bill, the fast-pay administrator to establish and approve procedures for the review, approval, and timely payment of claims by individual claimants for damages as a result of an "activating wildfire", a wildfire for which an eligible entity activates the fast-pay program.

c) Requires settlements pursuant to the fast-pay program to count as settlements of eligible claims and to be paid from the Continuation Account, if the eligible entity, defined as an electric utility or public agency that has a WMP approved by the OEIS is a participating electrical corporation.
d) Requires, if the eligible entity is not a participating electrical corporation, the eligible entity to be solely responsible for directly paying amounts to satisfy settlement offers pursuant to the fast-pay program.

3) Relevant to limitations on the sale of wildfire claims:

a) Prohibits an individual, business corporation, or other entity from selling, assigning, or transferring any wildfire claim, or any right of recovery on a wildfire claim, to a private equity group, and prohibits an individual, wildfire attorney, corporation, or other entity from selling, assigning, or transferring, in whole or in part, any contingency fee on an interest in a contingency fee, except as provided.
b) Prohibits a private equity group from paying any wildfire expenses with respect to a wildfire claim and from funding wildfire advertising costs with respect to any applicable wildfire that damages or destroys (1) more than 100 structures, or (2) more than 10,000 acres of land, and authorizes the Attorney General or any district attorney to bring a civil action to enforce that prohibition.

4) Relevant to limiting legal representation solicitations and legal fees related to electrical corporation's equipment-ignited wildfires:

a) Requires an attorney who contracts to represent a client involving a claim against an electric utility involving an applicable wildfire to provide a disclosure to the client the options and requirements involving the fast-pay program.
b) Prohibits a person, firm, partnership, association, or corporation from making an unsolicited targeted communication to solicit any business for any attorneys concerning a potential action for wrongful death, personal injury, or property damage within 30 days of an event, defined as an incident resulting in the proclamation of a state of emergency.
c) Prohibits, for any claim based on inverse condemnation against an electrical corporation arising from a covered wildfire caused by an electrical corporation, the fee for an attorney representing an insurer involving a subrogated claim from exceeding 10% of the settlement or judgment.

5) Relevant to executive incentive compensation of electrical corporations:

   a) Revises the requirement related to the executive incentive compensation structure, among other things, to require the electrical corporation to file the approved written executive incentive compensation structure with OEIS at least one year before the executive incentive compensation structure would become effective.
   b) Requires the OEIS to approve an electrical corporation's executive incentive compensation structure if it is structured to promote safety as a priority and to ensure public safety and utility stability with performance metrics, includes a provision denying all short-term incentive compensation to the chief executive officer, or the officer holding an equivalent position, for a calendar year in which the electrical corporation causes a catastrophic wildfire that results in one or more fatalities, and meets the principles specified in existing law for the compensation structure.
   c) Requires, for a large electrical corporation, the executive incentive compensation structure to meet certain requirements, including a requirement for the structure to include a written presumption that 35% of the total incentive compensation for each executive officer will be denied for at least one year in the event the electrical corporation causes a catastrophic wildfire that results in one or more fatalities.

6) Relevant to Wildfire Fund Continuation Account:

   a) Authorizes the Wildfire Fund Administrator, if the administrator provides the required notification that all large electrical corporations elected to participate in the Continuation Account, to incur indebtedness and issue bonds solely for purposes of supporting the Continuation Account and other related expenses incurred by the administrator, provided that bonds authorized under this provision are payable solely from annual contributions and additional contributions, as provided.
   b) Authorizes the bonds issued by the DWR, at the discretion of the administrator, to be secured solely by ratepayer contributions.
   c) Prohibits the Wildfire Fund or Continuation Account from being terminated while bonds issued by the DWR remain outstanding, unless an amount sufficient to pay remaining debt service on those bonds has been irrevocably set aside for those purposes. Requires, upon the determination of the administrator that the Wildfire Fund should be terminated, any remaining Wildfire Fund assets to be transferred to the Continuation Account, and upon the determination of the administrator that the Continuation Account

should be terminated, requires any remaining funds to be transferred to the General Fund.

d) Makes an appropriation, by transferring those moneys into a continuously appropriated account.
e) Makes additional technical and conforming changes.
f) Requires revenues and bond proceeds received by the DWR pursuant to the provisions related to the Continuation Account to be deposited into an account or subaccount within the DWR Charge Fund, and to be held separate and apart from amounts held in the DWR Charge Fund pursuant to provisions related to the Wildfire Fund.

7) Relevant to closed sessions by the California Catastrophe Response Council overseeing the Wildfire Fund or Continuation Account:

   a) Authorizes the California Catastrophe Response Council to hold closed sessions when addressing either the administration or evaluation of individual claims submitted for reimbursement from the Wildfire Fund or the Continuation Account, or the development of strategy related to reinsurance or other mechanisms to extend the durability of the Wildfire Fund or Continuation Account.
   b) Exempts records held by the California Catastrophe Response Council, or the CEA as the Wildfire Fund Administrator, that relate to the administration or evaluation of claims submitted for reimbursement from the Wildfire Fund or Continuation Account from the California Public Records Act.

8) Makes legislative findings that it is necessary that this act limit the public's right of access to the meetings of public bodies or the writings of public officials and agencies in order to protect the confidential and personally identifying information of wildfire survivors or individual claimants.

9) Declares that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute in order to address the risks of possible catastrophic wildfires in the fall and winter of 2026 and provide for no delay in the commencement of strategic planning, data sharing, creation of the Fast-Pay Program, and protections against speculative investing and private equity involvement in future wildfires.

Background

Wildfires and financial claims related to utility equipment-ignited fires. After several catastrophic wildfires ignited by electric utility infrastructure, including the deadly 2018 Camp Fire, a 2017 CPUC decision to disallow costs requested in an application by San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) from fires in 2007, and Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E's) 2019 decision to file for bankruptcy in part to address claims from several fires (including the Camp Fire of 2018, Atlas, Nuns and Tubbs of Fires[2] in 2017, the Legislature and Governor negotiated and passed AB 1054 (Holden, Chapter 79, Statutes of 2019), which in addition to the numerous provisions related to addressing wildfires caused by electric utility infrastructure, also included the authorization for a Wildfire Fund to pay for damages from future fires caused by electric utility infrastructure and subject to inverse condemnation requirements to pay just compensation. AB 1054 established the formula for contributions for the fund, specifically half paid by shareholders and the other collected from ratepayers via a volumetric charge on their utility bills (roughly $0.005/kilowatt-hour) to capitalize up to $21 billion in claims-paying capacity if the large electrical corporations elected to participate. The authorizing statute included a sunset date of 2035 on the Wildfire Fund, under the premise that the Fund would not be needed long-term, but only as a limited-time additional insurance policy while electrical corporations reduced their wildfire risks by investing and implementing wildfire mitigation measures.

Wildfire Fund durability? The scale and scope of the deadly and catastrophic Southern California fires in January 2025, particularly the Eaton Fire in Altadena which has been found to have been ignited by an out-of-service electrical transmission line owned by the electric investor-owned utility (IOU), Southern California Edison (SCE), has raised concerns about the durability of the Wildfire Fund and the existing measures related to addressing wildfire liability claims. The Wildfire Fund is currently capitalized at nearly $15 billion with contributions from shareholders of the state's three large electric IOUs, (PG&E, SDG&E, and SCE), and their customers. The Wildfire Fund administrator – the California Earthquake Authority (CEA) – is currently tracking reported losses from four fires – the October 2019 Kinkade Fire (roughly estimated at just over $1 billion in aggregate liabilities), July 2021 Dixie Fire (roughly estimated at just over $2 billion in aggregate liabilities), potential eligibility of the 2022 Mosquito Fire claims to access the fund, and the Eaton Fire in Altadena. As of March 2026, PG&E had recorded a potential recovery of $1.15 billion for the Dixie Fire and $1 billion has been paid from the Fund. SCE has reported approximately 1,500 lawsuits pending, representing 20,000 individual plaintiffs, subrogation lawsuits, and lawsuits filed

[2] The fire investigation for the Tubbs Fire in Sonoma County found the fire was ignited by a private electrical line. However, victims disputed the role that PG&E's operation of the electrical utility system played in igniting the fire. Ultimately, PG&E agreed to settle Tubbs Fire claims, along with those of fires where PG&E's equipment was found to have ignited the fire, as part of its 2019 U.S. bankruptcy case.

by public entity plaintiffs. SCE also has lawsuits against local public agencies for their response to the Eaton Fire.

Eaton Fire in January 2025. On September 12, 2025, SCE reported to the Wildfire Fund Administrator that it had settled a claim that alleged damage arising out of the Eaton Fire, which resulted in a court-approved dismissal, and SCE believes that because of this action the Eaton Fire is now a covered wildfire. The recent release of the fire investigation report citing the out-of-service transmission line as the cause of the Eaton Fire's ignition further underscores that the fire is a covered wildfire for which the utility can access the fund. In anticipation of tens of billions of dollars in estimated costs stemming from the Eaton Fire, there are concerns the costs from that sole fire will deplete the Wildfire Fund. In response, SB 254 (Becker, Chapter 119, Statutes of 2025) included several provisions related to electric IOUs and wildfires, including authorizing a continuation of the Wildfire Fund should the fund be exhausted (known as the Continuation Account) for an additional 10 years and required a study by April 2026 by the administrator of the Wildfire Fund – the CEA – to recommend additional approaches to socializing the costs of utility equipment-ignited wildfires and related disasters.

On April 7th, the Wildfire Fund administrator (the California Earthquake Authority) released the report, *Enhancing California's Resiliency to Natural Catastrophes (the SB 254 Study Report)*[3], which includes a myriad of recommendations concerning community wildfire mitigation, changes to property insurance markets and subrogation claims, and changes to policies requiring electric utilities (and their customers) to absorb costs from catastrophic fires. Multiple Senate and Assembly Committees held informational hearings earlier in the year to discuss and debate the various policies proposed in the report.

Three-party deal announced on Saturday, August 29th. This bill reflects a three-party deal and compromise between the leadership of both legislative houses and the Governor on addressing the recommendations in the *SB 254 Study Report* and related issues to tackle wildfire risks, prevention, preparedness, and processes for cost recovery of claims from electrical corporation equipment-ignited wildfires, among others.[4] Specifically, this bill is intended to:

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[3] California Earthquake Authority: Administrator of the Wildfire Fund. SB 254 Study Report, *Enhancing California's Resiliency to Natural Catastrophes Senate Bill 254 (2025) Study Report*, April 7, 2026. *https://www.cawildfirefund.com/sites/wildfire/files/documents/2026/sb254-natcatresiliencyreport-locked-4-7-26.pdf*

[4] Governor Newsom statement on compromise to address wildfire risk, support fire survivors, and create stronger accountability | Governor of California

- Expand statewide wildfire prevention and preparedness (related recommendations were included in the *SB 254 Study Report*).
    - Direct the development of a comprehensive statewide community wildfire preparedness strategy to improve coordination and reduce risk.
    - Establish a coordinated statewide data system – including publicly accessible catastrophe modeling, regulations aligning risk mitigation incentives with insurance rates, and public mitigation-data repository to guide state investments and inform insurance models.
    - Support the development of community and regional wildfire protection plans.
- Create a new Fast-Pay Program as an option for wildfire survivors to receive up to 20% of their anticipated settlement more quickly (a similar recommendation was included in the *SB 254 Study Report*).
    - The Fast-Pay Program would provide a state-administered option (by the CEA, that oversees the Wildfire Fund and Continuation Account) to advance payments of up to 20% of the probable settlement offer. This is intended as an improved option to the current electric IOU-administered settlement pathways available to wildfire survivors.
    - Requires electrical corporations to pay the administrative costs (via their insurance, the Continuation Account, or as a securitized cost).
    - Authorizes public agencies to participate and requires them to self-fund their participation.
    - Provides that wildfire survivors may decline an offer within 30 days after a settlement offer is made from the Fast-Pay Program.
    - Prohibits claims information from public disclosure.
    - Requires attorneys to disclose information about the Fast-Pay Program to their clients.
- Limit private equity group roles and attorneys' roles and fees to help address overall costs of wildfire claims.
    - Limit private equity groups (often referred to as hedge funds) from buying insurance subrogation wildfire claims with the expectation of seeking higher settlement costs.
    - Prohibits advertising by so-called "billboard attorneys" after a catastrophic wildfire that is subject to inverse condemnation.
    - Caps attorneys' fees to 10% of insurance subrogation claims.
- Recast and revise electrical IOU executive incentive compensation to better promote safety.
    - Prohibits electrical corporation executives from short-term incentive compensation in a year (and the following year) where their equipment ignites a catastrophic wildfire, requires long-term incentive compensation

to be held or deferred for at least three years, and requires a written presumption that 35% of the total incentive compensation for each executive officer will be denied.
  - Makes changes to the existing requirements of the executive incentive compensation framework required for an electrical corporation to receive a safety certificate by OEIS. These changes require safety-weighting within long-term incentive compensation in response to a recommendation by OEIS noting that not all large electrical corporations were including such a framework.
  - Requires the total incentive compensation to have a minimum weighting of 35%, and the long-term incentive compensation to have a minimum weighting of 25%.
- Changes to Wildfire Fund, Continuation Account, and related administration oversight and processes.
  - Authorizes bond issuance by the administrator of the Wildfire Fund with the intention of lowering financing costs.
  - Authorizes that certain information may not be disclosed to the public, including specific information concerning claims.
  - Authorizes closed sessions to discuss strategy related to reinsurance or other mechanisms to extend the durability of the Wildfire Fund or the Continuation Account.

With regards to the Fast-Pay Program. Wildfire survivors have also expressed distrust of the electric IOUs' pathways to settle claims and expedite partial funding from claims against the electric IOU. Both SCE and PG&E faced criticism about the adequacy of the options they initially made available to wildfire survivors following catastrophic wildfires in their service territories. The *SB 254 Study Report* included a recommendation for a state-administered fast-pay option to help wildfire survivors receive cash infusion sooner to help them recover, eliminate attorney's costs, and thereby reduce overall costs paid by the Wildfire Fund and Continuation Account. It is unclear whether future wildfire survivors will find the Fast-Pay Program, as proposed, an improved alternative to the current settlement pathways administered by the electric IOUs. The Utility Wildfire Survivors Coalition raises concerns that the fast-pay option proposed in this bill would force quick decisions by wildfire survivors, prior to examination of reports, full evidence preservation, complete damage assessments and insurance reviews. They support fast help but oppose what they contend is a forced settlement pathway in this bill.

Prior/Related Legislation

AB 2700 (Patterson, 2026) requires the CPUC, by January 1, 2028, to generate a report assessing the verified restitution shortfalls for victims of wildfires caused by electrical corporations occurring before July 12, 2019, and to recommend restitution mechanisms for electrical corporations to address restitution shortfalls. The bill is headed to the Governor.

SB 254 (Becker, Chapter 119, Statutes of 2025) an urgency bill that proposed various policies related to electrical corporations, including: authorizing public financing and ownership electric transmission infrastructure; addressing wildfire mitigation spending and financing; liability of wildfire property claims; permitting of clean energy projects; transparency of electrical corporations' return on equity; enforcement of timeliness of energization projects; prohibitions on large electrical corporations from including in their equity rate base an additional $6 billion of wildfire mitigation capital expenditures.

AB 1054 (Holden, Chapter 79, Statutes of 2019) numerous provisions related to addressing wildfires caused by electric utility infrastructure, including: bolstering safety oversight and processes, recasting recovery of costs from damages to third parties, including the authorization for an electrical corporation and ratepayer jointly funded Wildfire Fund to address future damages.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: Yes Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/31/26)

Climate Action Campaign
Natural Resources Defense Council
NextGen California
The Utilities Reform Network

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/31/26)

Utility Wildfire Survivor Coalition

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: The Climate Action Campaign, NextGen California, Natural Resources Defense Council, and The Utility Reform Network state:

> We write in support of SB 492. We also continue to urge for action on wildfire reforms now that will provide meaningful relief for electricity customers and provide durable support for wildfire prevention. Comprehensive reforms are urgently needed to attain rate relief, including true wildfire liability reform and reduction in harm to communities through systemic investments in prevention.

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: The Utility Wildfire Survivor Coalition states:

> California Wildfire Relief Fast-Pay Program risks becoming a fast-release program for utility accountability and liabilities. Survivors should NOT be pressured into early settlement decisions before officials produce fire-cause reports, ensure full evidence preservation, complete damages assessments and insurance reviews. These concerns are especially urgent given PG&E's recent admitted failure to preserve evidence in the 2022 Mosquito Fire and the May 2026 bankruptcy notice disclosing that PG&E, together with the Fire Victim Trust, intended to dispose of physical evidence connected to the 2017 North Bay Fire investigations. In other words… Fast help, yes. Fast releases, no. Emergency advances, yes. Forced settlement pathways, no. We must support the full, fair and timely restitution for wildfire survivors AND investor-owned utility accountability.

Prepared by: Nidia Bautista / E., U. & C. / (916) 651-4107
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