

THIRD READING

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Bill No: SB 899  
Author: Grove (R), et al.  
Amended: 3/18/26  
Vote: 21

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SENATE NATURAL RES. & WATER COMMITTEE: 7-0, 3/24/26

AYES: Becker, Seyarto, Allen, Cabaldon, Grove, Laird, Stern

SENATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE: 7-0, 4/22/26

AYES: Blakespear, Valladares, Allen, Dahle, Gonzalez, Hurtado, Menjivar

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 5/14/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

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**SUBJECT:** Fire prevention: Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force: wildfire smoke

**SOURCE:** Author

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**DIGEST:** This bill requires the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force (Task Force), on or before July 1, 2028, and in cooperation with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, the State Air Resources Board, and the Department of Public Health, to assess the health costs and impacts of wildfire smoke, and to develop a model to determine the health benefits of achieving the goals of the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Task Force (Public Resources Code (PRC) §4005).
- 2) Requires the Task Force to update the Action Plan every five years, beginning March 1, 2026 (PRC §4771(f)).
- 3) Requires the implementation strategy include specific actions:

- a) Increasing the pace and scale of wildfire and forest resilience activities (PRC §4771(c)(1));
- b) Strengthening the protection of communities and reducing their fire risk (PRC §4771(c)(2));
- c) Creating a sustainable wood products market in California (PRC §4771(c)(3));
- d) Sustaining and expanding outdoor recreation on forestland (PRC §4771(c)(4));
- e) Protecting and expanding urban canopy and forestry (PRC §4771(c)(5)); and
- f) Driving innovation and measuring progress in achieving the above goals (PRC §4771(c)(6)).

This bill:

- 1) Requires the Task Force, on or before July 1, 2028, to cooperate with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the State Air Resources Board, and the Department of Public Health (DPH) to assess the health costs and impacts of wildfire smoke using existing wildfire smoke and health data.
- 2) Requires the assessment to include the following:
  - a) Estimate the number of emergency room visits and deaths from wildfire smoke in California since July 1, 2018;
  - b) Develop a cost estimate for the health care costs of smoke from wildfires in California since July 1, 2018;
  - c) Develop a model to determine the approximate health benefits (both cost and human health benefits) of achieving the goals of the Action Plan; and
  - d) Make recommendations on how the Action Plan can increase its health benefits.
- 3) Allows the Task Force to enter into contracts with an independent group to assist with the assessment.

- 4) Requires the Task Force to include the assessment and additional actions to reduce the health impacts of wildfire smoke in the first update to the Action Plan that occurs after completion of the assessment.

## **Background**

*Promoting a more complete understanding of the benefits of wildfire resilience.*

There is general scientific consensus about the value of wildfire mitigation activities for forest health, ecological values, habitat, water quality, and other natural resources. However, catastrophic wildfires also impact public health through smoke inhalation. These public health impacts can be felt hundreds and even thousands of miles away as smoke travels through the atmosphere. This bill would help the state quantify the negative public health impacts of wildfire smoke, and understand the benefits of wildfire mitigation activities as they relate to reducing those impacts.

## **Prior/Related Legislation**

SB 223 (Alvarado-Gil, 2025) would have required DPH to maintain a statewide integrated wildfire smoke and health data platform to provide information to understand the negative health impacts of wildfire smoke and evaluate the impacts of wildfire mitigation on health outcomes. This bill was held on the Senate Appropriations Committee suspense file.

AB 2243 (Eduardo Garcia, Chapter 778, Statutes of 2022) requires the Division of Occupational Safety and Health to consider revising the wildfire smoke standard to reduce the existing air quality index threshold for PM<sub>2.5</sub> at which respiratory equipment becomes mandatory for farmworkers.

AB 661 (McCarty, Chapter 392, Statutes of 2019) requires the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality District to prepare a wildfire smoke emergency plan.

AB 836 (Wicks, Chapter 393, Statutes of 2019) establishes the Wildfire Smoke Clean Air Centers for Vulnerable Populations Incentive Pilot Program. This program sunset on January 1, 2025.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee analysis:

- OEHHA estimates one-time costs of at least \$4 million (General Fund) in contract funds for completion of the required studies in cooperation with the other departments named in this bill.
- The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) estimates one-time costs of \$500,000 (General Fund) to support the cost of a contract to hire an outside entity to produce the required assessment of wildfire smoke, health costs, and impacts.
- Unknown, potentially significant one-time costs (General Fund) for CDPH to implement the provisions of this bill.
- The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), and Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) anticipate any costs would be minor and absorbable.

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 5/14/86)

California Forest Watershed Alliance (sponsor)  
Association of California Water Agencies  
Bay Area Council  
California Farm Bureau  
California Farm Bureau Federation  
California Fire Chiefs Association  
California Forestry Association  
California State Association of Counties  
City of Fontana  
League of California Cities  
Megafire Action  
Sierra Business Council  
The Nature Conservancy

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 5/14/26)

None received

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** According to the author, "Wildfire smoke is impacting the health of millions of Californians, yet we do not consistently measure the full public health and economic costs. SB 899 helps us better understand these impacts so the state can make informed decisions and ensure our policies reflect the true cost of wildfires on our communities."

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5/18/26 15:03:44

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