LETTERHEAD

DATE

The Honorable Henry Stern

California State Senate

1021 O Street, Room 7630

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Senate Bill 499 – Residential projects: fees and charges: emergency services –**

**SUPPORT (As Amended March 26, 2025)**

Dear Senator Stern:

On behalf of [Organization], I am writing to express our support for Senate Bill (SB) 499. This bill is a critical measure that clarifies existing law to ensure parkland and recreational facilities, when designated in a local agency’s hazard mitigation or related emergency services plan, are eligible for certain fee deferral exemptions.

As California faces increasingly severe wildfires and other climate-driven disasters, it is vital that we empower communities with every available tool for mitigation and emergency response. Parks and recreational areas are more than community amenities—they are integral components of our public safety infrastructure. These spaces serve as fuel breaks, emergency gathering sites, evacuation staging areas, and heating or cooling centers during climate emergencies.

Recent events such as the Palisades and Eaton Fires have underscored the need for comprehensive, cross-sector planning. SB 499 acknowledges and codifies the essential role that parks and recreational facilities play in emergency preparedness and wildfire resiliency.

By clarifying that these facilities are eligible for fee deferral exemptions under existing development statutes, SB 499 will remove ambiguity and support more effective local planning and resource allocation. It complements the intent of SB 937 (Wiener) [Chapter 290, Statutes of 2024] by ensuring that park infrastructure—when directly related to public safety—is not overlooked in development-related funding decisions. [Organization] is committed to supporting practical, forward-thinking solutions that build community resilience and protect Californians from the growing threats of climate change. We thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support Senate Bill 499. Should you have any questions, please contact [phone/email].

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Organization

CC: Members and Staff of the Senate Local Government Committee