

TO: Honorable Issac G. Bryan, Chair
Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Members, Assembly Natural Resources Committee

FROM: Norwood Associates, LLC

DATE: April 3, 2025

RE: AB 404 (Sanchez)--SUPPORT

On behalf of our client, Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of California (IIABCal) we are writing to offer our Support for the above referenced bill.

California's devastating wildfires in recent years have highlighted the urgent need for proactive forest management and fire prevention strategies. The existing CEQA exemption has proven to be an effective tool for expediting critical wildfire prevention projects while maintaining environmental safeguards through the federal NEPA process. By making this exemption permanent, AB 404 will eliminate redundant environmental reviews that delay essential fire prevention efforts, accelerate the implementation of prescribed burns, forest thinning, and fuel reduction initiatives, and strengthen partnerships between state agencies and federal land managers. Additionally, it will help protect communities by reducing wildfire risk through strategic forest management while preserving environmental oversight through the comprehensive NEPA review process.

California faces unprecedented wildfire risks due to climate change, prolonged drought conditions, and decades of forest management challenges. The timely implementation of science-based wildfire prevention projects is essential to protecting our communities, natural resources, and air quality from catastrophic wildfires.

AB 404 strikes the right balance between streamlining necessary prevention work and ensuring appropriate environmental review. By removing duplicative processes while maintaining federal environmental oversight, this legislation will allow California to continue making progress on critical wildfire resilience efforts.

For the above stated reason, IIABCal would urge your "AYE" vote on AB 404. Thank you

Thank you.

cc: Matt Julian, Office of Assemblymember Kate Sanchez
Lawrence Lingbloom, Chief Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Elizabeth MacMillian, Principal Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Paige Brokaw, Senior Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Casey Dunn, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Brady Borcharding, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor

