

Claudia Bill-de la Peña
Mayor

April 11, 2021

Hon. Mike McGuire
Chair, Governance and Finance Committee
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 3191
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 55 (STERN) VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE: STATE
RESPONSIBILITY AREA: DEVELOPMENT PROHIBITION-SUPPORT**

Dear Chair McGuire,

On behalf of the City of Thousand Oaks, I am pleased support SB 55. This bill supports fire-safe growth by prohibiting further residential, commercial and industrial development in very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZs). The City is located in between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara in Ventura County, nestled against the Santa Monica Mountains and boasts over 15,000 acres of natural publicly owned open space located within its boundaries.

With climate change generating cyclical drought patterns in the State, many regions, including Ventura County are susceptible to large wildfires. In 2017, the western part of the County was impacted by the Thomas Fire and in 2018, the Woolsey wildfire which resulted in a two-day evacuation in Thousand Oaks. Just this January, the City experienced a rapidly growing wildfire again. Even with growing patterns of wildfires, cities are still required to plan and approve new housing in accordance with existing state housing laws in areas that are considered to be in VHFHSZs.

Although education, programs and services exist to assist property owners in VHFHSZs with home hardening practices, the true solution is to simply prevent development. Preventing development in such zones reduces wildfire risk, as well as associate cost of damage and destruction, while also saving lives.

For these reasons, we support this bill.

Sincerely,



Claudia Bill-de la Peña
Mayor

cc: Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin
Senator Henry Stern
David Mullinax- Regional Public Affairs Manager, dmullinax@cacities.org
League of California Cities, cityletters@cacities.org
Joe A. Gonsalves and Son

cmo:660-40/SB 55 No Homes in VHFHZ - Support.ml

