

NEWS RELEASE

PENINSULA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OPPOSE NEW FEE IMPOSED ON CONSTITUENTS

State Levies Additional Cost With Out Providing Additional Services

Peninsula Fire Protection District Board of Directors adopted a resolution opposing the newly implemented State Responsibility Area (SRA) fees, which will impose additional financial burden on its constituents without providing additional fire services.

SRA fees mandate that many homeowners living in forested or wildfire-prone areas pay an annual fee of \$150 to the State of California for fire-prevention services. The Fire Districts Association of California (FDAC) has actively opposed the bill on behalf of its fire district members since the idea was presented a few years ago as a way to generate additional revenues for the state.

Peninsula Fire Protection District has homes located in these State Responsibility Areas (SRAs), which are designated zones that are already primarily protected by fire districts. These homeowners already pay local taxes for year-round fire prevention and protection services. It is the position of **Peninsula Fire Protection District** that this annual \$150 SRA fee is onerous to the residents who will not see any direct benefit from California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the state's firefighting agency. Local fire districts will not receive any of the estimated \$125 million collected as the state struggles to fill its budget gaps.

Peninsula Fire Protection District and FDAC did not support this legislation nor believe that this fee should be imposed on the residents served. California's Master Mutual Aid System, which is a model for the rest of the nation, has for decades inspired collaboration between local fire agencies and the state and will be jeopardized by these fees. Local fire agencies are concerned that with the implementation of the SRA fees, any future measures supporting local fire protection, prevention and paramedic services will simply not be approved by voters on top of the SRA fee charged by the state putting the local agency and its constituents at risk. "If it is the will of the State Legislature to reduce the burden on the State's General Fund for CALFIRE costs, an alternative and more equitable mechanism is necessary," said **Robert Phillips, Peninsula Fire Protection District Board President.**