

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 24

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 112

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 24—Relative to forest protection and restoration.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 9, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 24, Dahle. Forest protection and restoration.

This measure would encourage state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over forest resource management to collaborate across jurisdictions with regard to landscape-scale efforts to maintain and restore California's forests to protect the state's natural resources and water supply for future generations.

WHEREAS, One of the greatest ongoing challenges for California is to ensure an adequate supply of water for myriad human uses and other environmental needs while also addressing the increasing and negative impacts of climate change on our watersheds; and

WHEREAS, The large majority of the water used by California originates in the 10 million-acre forested area of northern California feeding the Sacramento River, with the Sacramento River providing 60 percent of the water for the Central Valley and state water projects, drinking water for 25 million Californians, and over 80 percent of the freshwater to San Francisco Bay; and

WHEREAS, California's forests represent our largest, safest, and most expandable opportunity to actively remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, The forests and watersheds of California face multiple challenges and pressures, including the loss and degradation of forests by the subdivision, fragmentation, and development of lands, the planting of unnaturally dense forests as a result of fire suppression, and stresses from a changing climate; and

WHEREAS, California's forests provide an essential natural infrastructure that collects, stores, filters, and transports water in a materially more cost-effective manner than any built infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, Managing these forested watersheds to restore and enhance their sustained water provision services will also create rural jobs and enhance the state's ability to address climate change, including by reducing firefighting costs; and

WHEREAS, In addition to supplying the majority of the state's water and sequestering vast amounts of carbon, forests clean our air and provide habitat for wildlife, all while supporting rural economies through outdoor

recreation such as hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping, as well as through the forest products industry; and

WHEREAS, Preventing further loss of California's forests, restoring degraded forest areas, and improving management are critical parts of ensuring that our watersheds continue to store carbon and produce high-quality clean water in the future; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of California recognizes the value of forests in providing critical ecosystem services, including water supply and climate stabilization services; and be it further

Resolved, That the state and federal governmental agencies with jurisdiction over forest resource management are encouraged to collaborate across jurisdictions with regard to landscape-scale efforts to maintain and restore California's forests to protect the state's natural resources and water supply for future generations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to the Minority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.