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 1111 16th Street
Sacramento, California 95814

March 7, 2025

The Honorable Nick Schultz
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 306 – OPPOSITION

Dear Assemblymember Shultz:

With regret, we write to inform you of our **OPPOSITION** to Assembly Bill 306 (AB 306). As you know, AB 306 would delay the enforcement and implementation of life saving building, residential, and fire codes for a specified period of time. We appreciate your willingness to hear our concerns as summarized below.

Triennial and Interim Code Adoptions. For years, California was behind in the adoption of modern, progressive, and sustainable building, residential, and fire codes. Over the preceding two-decades, our organization has worked tirelessly alongside the model code developers and state regulatory agencies to change course in the name of public safety – and we did it. Codes change on a triennial cycle because advancements in the name of public safety routinely occur. Further, we allow the state to make changes on an interim 18-month mid-cycle as these changes are oftentimes cited as being essential to public safety and welfare. Californians in all parts of our state deserve to live and work under the most relative and advanced codes available. Circumventing the current codes in the name of expediency and pragmatism is a disservice to those you serve.

Wildfire Mitigation. Just last month, California became the first state to adopt a model wildfire-urban interface (WUI) code that will be enforceable in the next code cycle. The devastation that occurred in your very jurisdiction was the rationale cited for the statewide WUI code need. Given our progress and demonstrated understanding of greater wildfire mitigation efforts, why would we not rebuild to the new and improved standards? As we seek to ensure that raging wildfires similar to the Hughes, Palisades, and Eaton devastation do not occur again, we need to rebuild to the highest available and approved standard.

Letter of Opposition – AB 306

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Local Control. Our organization is founded upon the premise that California's communities are not "one size fits all." We believe in the autonomy of our public sector jurisdictions in knowing what is best for the communities they serve, which is why they are enabled to make local amendments above state-required minimum standards. Above, not below. Lessening the state required standards and circumventing local ordinances does not lead to proper governance or recognized models of modern federalism. It ties the hands and removes the available tools to the public sector fiduciaries sworn to protect their communities.

We understand well the district that you represent and the rebuilding efforts currently underway. Although we respect your position to expedite and control the associated costs of the post-wildfire rebuilding efforts, it should not be in the name of technological advancement that protects the safety of the public. We hope that you will join us in envisioning a safer, hardened, and more fire resistant future in California through the enforcement of modern and approved standards.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew Wheeler", is positioned above the printed name.

Matthew Wheeler, DPPD
Executive Director

CC: Assembly Committee on Housing & Community Development

