



March 8, 2023

The Honorable Robert Rivas, Chair
 Assembly Committee on Agriculture
 1020 N Street, Suite 362
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 54 (Aguiar-Curry) – Support

Dear Assemblymember Rivas:

We are writing to you in support of AB 54 (Aguiar-Curry), which creates an advisory committee to recommend the distribution of state funds for winegrape smoke exposure research. Our organizations represent winegrape growers, wineries, and affiliated businesses who have been disproportionately impacted by wildfire smoke over the last five years. Significant investment in research to measure, mitigate, and prevent impacts from smoke are needed to help ensure the continued success of California’s wine community.

AB 54 (Aguiar-Curry) will help California vintners and winegrape growers better address wildfire smoke exposure in California vineyards by funding the following research:

- Accurate measurement of smoke compounds in winegrapes and wine;

- Methods to mitigate the damage to winegrapes and wine that can occur from exposure to smoke; and
- Methods to prevent smoke damage to winegrapes and wine.

California’s vineyards and wineries have been severely impacted by wildfires and smoke exposure in recent years. The 2020 fires alone are expected to cost vineyards and wineries \$3.7 billion. The grapes that weren’t harvested due to smoke exposure from the 2020 wildfires cost winegrape growers \$601 million and are expected to result in lost wine sales of \$2.8 billion. This has been repeated numerous times in recent years. California’s wineries and winegrape growers saw significant losses in many parts of the state, the North Coast and Central Coast have been particularly hard hit by smoke impacts. Wildfires in 2021 caused damage to winegrapes in the Sierra Foothills. Consumer perceptions of the potential impact to California wine quality due to smoke exposure led to further economic losses, particularly in important export markets.

AB 54 (Aguiar-Curry) will help California’s wineries and winegrape growers by creating an advisory committee to advise the Secretary of California’s Department of Food and Agriculture how to distribute state funds for research into measurement, mitigation, and prevention of smoke damage to California winegrapes.

California’s wine community has been repeatedly threatened by catastrophic wildfires. More investment in research to help limit the impacts of smoke on winegrapes will help California’s wine community remain resilient. We urge your AYE vote on AB 54 (Aguiar-Curry) when it is heard by your committee.

Sincerely,




Michael Miiller
 Director of Government Relations
 California Assn. of Winegrape Growers



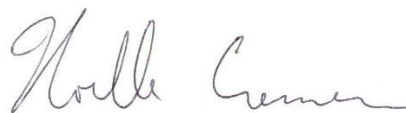
Chris Reardon
 Director of Governmental Affairs
 California Farm Bureau



Dave Runsten
 Senior Policy Analyst
 Community Alliance with Family Farmers



Edgar “Pete” Downs
 President
 Family Winemakers of California



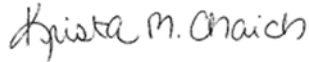
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 Affairs
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 Santa Barbara Vintners



Keikilani McKay
Executive Director
Santa Cruz Mountains Winegrowers Assn.



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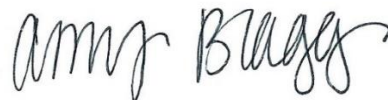
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Brandi Lombardi
Executive Director
Livermore Valley Wine Community



Amy Blagg
Executive Director
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Joel Peterson
Executive Director
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CC: The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
Members, Assembly Committee on Agriculture
Victor Francovich, Assembly Committee on Agriculture Consultant
Brent Finkel, Assembly Republican Caucus Consultant