



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 02 2019

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 394 without my signature.

This bill exempts from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), until January 1, 2025, egress route projects or activities undertaken by a public agency. The affected projects include those that are specifically recommended by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to improve the fire safety of an existing subdivision when certain conditions are met.

California's devastating wildfires of 2017 and 2018 amplified the urgent imperative to mitigate risk and build robust community emergency plans, especially for our most vulnerable in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). However, the CEQA exemption provided in this bill is premature and may result in unintended consequences. Without better information on the number, location and potential impacts of future fire safety road construction projects, it is not clear whether statutory changes are needed. Furthermore, it is important that we build solutions around the unique and targeted needs of each community.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom