

## **Argument against Measure – Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Initiative**

Your Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs' Association does not support this measure because it does not directly contribute to wildfire risk reduction nor directly fund all local fire agencies that are responsible for wildfire risk reduction.

The Fire Chiefs struggle with:

- The governance structure places decision-making in the hands of Santa Cruz County departments who themselves will be competing for funding.
- Direct fiscal apportionment to the County and cities but nothing to fire agencies best positioned to provide wildfire risk reduction in the unincorporated areas of the county.
- The advisory board serves 4 years terms, and no more than two terms. but can be extended indefinitely by the appointing agency.
- How this tax will apply to every non-exempt parcel in the County regardless of income capacity.

The measure as written over 16 pages identifies 17 areas of focus; wildfire risk reduction is just one of the areas competing for these funds. in light of the CZU wildfire experience, we believe funding should be prioritized, not minimized, to protect our communities and for it to be placed in those best positioned to protect them.

s/ Mark Bingham\*, President and Fire Chief, Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs Association  
s/ Stacie Brownlee\*, Treasurer and Fire Chief, Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs Association  
s/ Rob Oatey\*, Secretary and Fire Chief, Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs Association  
s/ Jason Nee\*, Vice President and Fire Chief, Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs Association

\* Signing on behalf of the Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs Association