



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

February 1, 2017

The Honorable Mike McGuire
Member, California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5064
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 58 – Wildlife Management Areas: payment of taxes and assessments – SUPPORT

Dear Senator McGuire:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to express our strong support for your Senate Bill 58 relating to State Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT). RCRC is an association of thirty-five rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of an elected Supervisor from each member counties.

Many of California's counties that contain State wildlife management areas also have a significant amount of federal and other State owned land within their boundaries that do not generate property tax revenues, an important source of revenue to fund local programs and services for county residents. California PILT was established in 1949 to offset adverse impacts to county property tax revenues that result when the State acquires private property for wildlife management areas.

As you know, the 2015-16 State Budget Package changed Fish and Game Code Section 1504 to make future State PILT payments permissive by changing the *'shall' pay annually* to *'may' pay annually*. SB 58 will return the *'may'* back to *'shall,'* effective January 1, 2019.

While RCRC appreciates that the Brown Administration included funding in the State Budget for State PILT for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 fiscal years following more than a decade of non-payment, and has proposed to fund State PILT in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, future Administration's may well choose to simply not make State PILT payments - leaving counties without recourse due to the now permissive nature of the language. SB 58 is a bipartisan effort setting an implementation date of January 1, 2019 to ensure future administrations recognize this commitment to counties both today and in the future.

RCRC is proud to be the sponsor of SB 58, and greatly appreciates your leadership on this issue of fairness to the 36 State PILT counties. RCRC looks forward to working with you toward its successful passage.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Warmerdam
Senior Legislative Representative