



DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION  
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

P.O. Box 944246  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460  
(916) 568-3800  
Website: [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov)



October 30, 2018

Laurie Berman, Director  
California Department of Transportation  
1120 N Street  
MS 49  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Director Berman:

On October 22, 2018, my staff attended a meeting with Assemblymember David Chiu's office to address concerns regarding the number of fires reported on Caltrans right of way property in San Francisco. The specific area in question is alongside State Highway 101 from 17<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> Streets. The effected homeowners were represented at the meeting sharing their concerns regarding the safety of their homes and livelihood. They have been attempting to work with Caltrans and California Highway Patrol (CHP) in a concerted effort to come to a resolution regarding fires being started in homeless encampments on Caltrans property in San Francisco.

During this meeting, it was reported that there have been hundreds of fires in this area. They also reported that within one week there were five fires. Although these fires were extinguished by the San Francisco Fire Department none were reported to this office for investigation.

Genesis Garcia staffer for Assemblymember Chiu's office requested that Deputies from this office tour the area with CHP to determine if a fire hazard truly exists. During this site visit staff determined that a fire hazard did exist and threatens the homes directly above this stretch of highway. Pursuant to; California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Section 3.07 (2) which states in part "Maintain around and adjacent to any such building or structure additional fire protection or firebreak made by removing all brush, flammable vegetation, or combustible growth which is located from 30 feet to 100 feet from such building or structure or to the property line, whichever is nearer..."

Caltrans is hereby ordered to abate this hazard. Please provide this office with a work plan within 30 days from receipt of this letter outlining the measure Caltrans will be taking to resolve or abate these concerns.

Director Laurie Berman  
October 30, 2018  
Page 2

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact either Chief of Fire and Life Safety, Stephen Guarino at (916) 568-2960 or Supervising Deputy Jack (CJ) Stinson at (916) 568-2968.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Mathisen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

DENNIS MATHISEN  
State Fire Marshal