

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND  
SUPPORTING SENATE BILL 959 TO EMPOWER LOCAL FIRE AGENCIES IN  
DETERMINING MAJOR SAFETY HAZARDS AND PROTECTING SCHOOL  
COMMUNITIES DURING WILDFIRE EMERGENCIES**

**WHEREAS**, the State of California is experiencing increasingly severe, year-round wildfire seasons, placing severe ecological, physical, and safety strains on municipalities, school districts, and residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) has established rigorous, science-backed “Wildfire Prepared Home” standards, outlining that structural survival requires holistic community mitigation—including defensible space, ignition-resistant building materials, and fuel management; and

**WHEREAS**, a critical component of community wildfire resilience is reducing human traffic and vehicular load on local roadways during peak fire weather to ensure that evacuation routes remain open, fluid, and accessible for first responders and fleeing residents; and

**WHEREAS**, fire officials, including leadership within the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), have publicly recognized that preemptively closing schools situated in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) during Red Flag Days is a proactive, life-saving measure to clear evacuation bottlenecks and keep children and families out of harm's way; and

**WHEREAS**, under current California law, school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education rely heavily on state apportionments tied to Average Daily Attendance (ADA) metrics, creating a financial disincentive for school administrators to close campuses during imminent safety hazards; and

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 959, joint-authored by State Senators Timothy Grayson and Jesse Arreguín, would immediately alleviate this financial burden by allowing a local fire agency to make a formal determination of the imminence of a major safety hazard; and

**WHEREAS**, SB 959 ensures that if a school must preemptively close or if attendance drops due to extreme wildfire metrics, the district’s state funding is protected, thereby allowing school boards to prioritize human life over budgetary penalization; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Richmond and its surrounding West Contra Costa communities contain significant Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) zones and hillsides that are highly susceptible to fast-moving brush fires and extreme wind events.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA, AS FOLLOWS:**

1. **Official Support:** The City of Richmond officially supports SB 959 (Grayson/Arreguín) and urges the California State Legislature and the Governor to pass and sign this urgency legislation into law.
2. **Distribution of Resolution:** The City Clerk is hereby directed to transmit copies of this resolution to Governor Gavin Newsom, Senator Timothy Grayson, Senator Jesse Arreguín, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, the California Fire Chiefs Association, and the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) Board of Education.

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**\*\*\*THE CLERK’S OFFICE WILL COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW\*\*\***

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held on Mmmm dd, yyyy, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT:

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CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND  
(SEAL)

Approved:

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Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney

State of California            }  
County of Contra Costa        }       : ss.  
City of Richmond               }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of **Resolution No.** \_\_\_\_\_, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting held on Mmmm dd, yyyy.

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Pamela Christian, Clerk of the City of Richmond