

Brown signs bill to fix fire fee

By Capital Press

SACRAMENTO – The more than 800,000 rural California residents charged \$150 per structure for fire prevention will get some relief in certain cases.

Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation that reduces the penalty for late payments from 20 percent to 10 percent per month and waives the fee for homeowners who lose their residence to a wildfire or other natural disaster.

Assembly Bill 2042 was authored by Assemblyman Brian Dahle, R-Bieber, and passed unanimously in both legislative chambers.

“Like most north state residents, I’d rather see the fee simply repealed,” Dahle said in a statement. “In the meantime, this bill reforms some of the worst aspects of the fee. In particular, it was egregious that the law taxed homeowners who’d lost their homes to fire.”

Farm groups and rural residents have complained vociferously about the fees, which were enacted as part of the 2011-2012 state budget package to offset costs to CalFire.

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