

UP and WRAP partners testify before Congress on insurance challenges and progress in wildfire-prone states

US House Committee on Financial Services

On September 22, 2022, in invited testimony before the U.S. House Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Housing, Community Development and Insurance, Executive Director Amy Bach presented consumer viewpoints and initiatives that are underway to restore affordable insurance options for property owners in wildfire-prone regions.

Other witnesses at the hearing, titled “State of Emergency: Examining the Impact of Growing Wildfire Risk on the Insurance Market” were California Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS) President and CEO Roy Wright, Rex Frazier, President, Personal Insurance Federation of California, and Matthew Auer, Dean of the School of Public and International Affairs, University of Georgia.

To read UP’s and other witnesses full written testimony or view the recording of the hearing, click [here](#).

Drought and extreme heat associated with climate change has increased wildfire risk in WUI (“Wildland Urban Interface”) and brush areas, and insurance companies are reacting by dropping long time customers and declining new business in those regions. This has made it very hard for home and business owners outside urban areas to keep their assets affordably or fully insured and comply with lender requirements. Reducing wildfire risk is critical to fixing this situation. Improving conditions so



structures are less likely to be damaged or destroyed in future wildfires will help restore insurer confidence and engagement in the California marketplace **and save homes!**

Through our [Wildfire Risk Reduction and Asset Protection initiative](#), (“WRAP”), United Policyholders is working to reduce wildfire risk and help restore affordable, available property insurance options for California home and business owners who are being hit with premium spikes, non-renewals and no place to turn but the California Fair Plan. UP is regularly convening a WRAP working group that includes representatives from the CA Department of Insurance and IBHS, firefighters, fire scientists and risk reduction advocates from all across the state. Through these convenings, UP is identifying and promoting best practices related to home hardening and defensible space and helping accelerate progress statewide to help residents and communities harden homes and create defensible space and put insurance incentives and rewards in place for those who take action to reduce risk.

Giving property owners a financial incentive (cheaper, more accessible insurance) will help get “all hands on deck” improving conditions in WUI and brush areas. UP is committed to helping establish incentives and rewards for those who invest time and money into risk reduction.

The information presented in this publication is for general informational purposes and is not a substitute for legal advice. If you have a specific legal issue or problem, United Policyholders recommends that you consult with an attorney. Guidance on hiring professional help can be found in the “Find Help” section of www.uphelp.org. United Policyholders does not sell insurance or certify, endorse or warrant any of the insurance products, vendors, or professionals identified on our website.

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