

**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

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April 8, 2019

To: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Subject: Revision/addition of current County code section 18.16.070(c)

Dear Board Members,

I'm writing this letter to ask for your support in revising Mendocino County code section 18.16.070. The code section as written presents significant challenges in the naming and renaming of road systems which occasionally is required to improve emergency response and public safety.

I oversee and enforce Public Resource Code 4290, which allows CAL FIRE to implement fire safe regulations upon review of all building applications within State responsibility areas. We routinely work with Mendocino County Planning and Building to ensure all building projects comply with appropriate emergency response requirements (i.e. road and driveway clearance, address marking, bridge access, turnouts, property setbacks, and defensible space). This law exists to ensure the best possible access and egress for emergency responders and provide for civilian safety. I only can enforce this law during phases of remodel, use permitting, and new construction where an application for building permit has been initiated. Occasionally we run into a situation where an old driveway or road system exists and does not have proper naming or addressing. This creates confusion for emergency responders, slows down response times, and overall, compromises public safety. If this is discovered while under a plan review, we can make the needed changes under conditions of approval. The problem arises when there is no permit application or plan review being conducted in the area and we want to correct the condition. I urge you to consider revising Mendocino County code section 18.16.070(c), to allow public safety agencies to submit such conditions to the County under the County-initiated road naming procedure for review by this Board.

During fast moving wildland fires, which we have experienced all too well over the past couple of years, orientation and location based on addressing becomes critical. The ability to navigate road systems and residential addressing is vital for both fire suppression access and evacuation of residents. During these complex incidents, we often are staffing the County with fire resources who are unfamiliar with the local area. State engines can be covering from other counties, and local engines can be covering State fire stations outside of their normal response area. We cannot rely on local knowledge and must be able to maintain clear and accurate maps/run books which will assist emergency resources in navigating our rural communities. We must have an expedited process for public safety agencies to submit these issues for correction when they're discovered. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

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Battalion Chief

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