

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF FRESNO
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

RESOLUTION NO. 26-283

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE SHEEP AND GOAT HERDING WAGE PARITY PROVISIONS IN
PLACE AS OF JULY 1, 2026, AND RETROACTIVE TO THAT DATE.**

WHEREAS, targeted grazing by goats in California is the most effective and eco-friendly means available to reduce the State's wildfire threat. Goats provide the perfect mix of agility and appetite to clear dry vegetation on steep, rocky hillsides and in residential areas that would otherwise burn. They can clear areas where heavy machinery and human crews cannot go; and

WHEREAS, Cal Fire uses goats to create natural buffer zones, and the Governor's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force specifically called for an increase in prescribed grazing in their "2025 Key Deliverables" report. Prescribed grazing aligns with Governor Newsom's Climate Change Executive Order (N-82-20) as a wildfire prevention tool which produces a net benefit in carbon sequestration and air quality, and is especially suited to enhance carbon neutrality in situations of rural-urban interface; and

WHEREAS, SB 675 (Limon, 2023) required the Task Force, on or before June 30, 2025, to develop a strategic action plan to expand the use of prescribed grazing, and for the State Board of Forestry to develop guidance for local and regional prescribed grazing plans; and

WHEREAS, despite this recognition by the Governor and Legislature of the critical role that this prescribed grazing plays in protecting life and property, the State of California has created a wage system that makes it impossible to sustain the existing goat herding operations, let alone expanding them to meet the ever-increasing fire danger; and

WHEREAS, the State commissioned a study by U.C. Davis to investigate if goat herding and sheep herding were substantially the same or significantly different. That study was completed in early 2026 and found that, indeed, the work was the same; and

WHEREAS, the annual salary for H-2A sheep herders and H-2A goat herders in California were both approximately \$58,000 as of July 1, 2026 (plus free housing, food, and transportation). The State's failure to extend the wage parity between sheep herders and goat herders means that, after July 1, 2026, the sheep salary

1 has not changed but the wages of goat herders will skyrocket to \$240,000 per year; and

2 **WHEREAS**, this wage spike caused by simple inaction puts the essential work of prescribed goat grazing
3 in jeopardy. Providers of this life-saving service now face labor costs that are simply unsustainable. Legislative
4 action is the only way to address this critical situation by aligning the sheep and goat wage requirements in
5 California.

6 **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Fresno County Board of Supervisors strongly urges
7 California State Assembly and Senate to enact legislation to extend the sheep and goat herding wage parity
8 provisions in place as of July 1, 2026, and retroactive to that date.

9 **THE FOREGOING**, was passed and adopted by the following vote of the Board of Supervisors of the
10 County of Fresno this 11th day of August 2026, to-wit:

11 AYES: Supervisors Bredefeld, Chavez, Magsig, Mendes, Pacheco

12 NOES: None

13 ABSENT: None

14 ABSTAINED: None

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16 _____
17 Garry Bredefeld, Chairman of the Board of
Supervisors of the County of Fresno

18 ATTEST:
19 BERNICE E. SEIDEL
20 Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Fresno, State of California

21 By 
22 _____
23 Deputy
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