

ALEX PADILLA

U.S. SENATOR *for* CALIFORNIA

The Smoke Exposure Crop Insurance Act of 2023

Senator Padilla invites you to cosponsor the “Smoke Exposure Crop Insurance Act of 2023.”

Increasingly frequent and catastrophic wildfires in California, Oregon, and Washington are threatening the long-term sustainability of important winegrowing regions. Vineyards, winery operations, and the communities they support are routinely facing the threat of wildfires that can not only destroy vineyards, but can damage fruit through prolonged smoke exposure, which can be absorbed into the grape, creating an ashy taste known as “smoke taint.” *In 2020 alone, industry sources estimate between 165,000 and 325,000 tons of California wine grapes were lost due to actual or perceived smoke damage, and financial estimates place losses at over \$600 million.*

The “**Smoke Exposure Crop Insurance Act of 2023**” is bipartisan legislation that directs the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Federal Crop Insurance Corporation to research, develop, and create a crop insurance policy to better insure against wine grape losses due to wildfire smoke exposure.

Wine grapes are vital to the economies of California, Oregon, and Washington—the largest producers of wine grapes in the United States and the most impacted by smoke-exposure. ***But crop insurance is not working for wine grapes—current products do not fully capture the risks associated with growing in these smoke and wildfire-prone states.***

The “Smoke Exposure Crop Insurance Act of 2023” would improve crop insurance for winegrape producers, wineries, and the consumers they support to help address the impossible choice facing producers after a wildfire: to harvest grapes knowing they may be unusable for wine? Or take an indemnity for what could be perfectly good wine grapes?

This bill gets us one step closer to answering that question.

The bill is endorsed by the Wine Institute, the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG), and Napa Valley Vintners (NVV).