



May 31, 2018

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The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair
The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Co-Chair
Members of the Budget Conference Committee
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Debris Removal Cost Share Waiver for Southern California Counties

Dear Honorable Conferees:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) writes to request funds to waive the county match requirement for debris removal for the Southern California counties impacted by Governor's declared disasters from the 2017 fires and 2018 mudslides. This waiver was included in the Governor's May Revision of the budget for Northern California counties, but not Southern California counties.

As you know, the 2017 fire season was among the deadliest and most destructive in California's history. In addition to the firestorms that tore through Northern California in November 2017, a series of major wildfires also erupted in Southern California, resulting in significant destruction in Ventura, Los Angeles, San Diego and Santa Barbara counties. These fires destroyed hundreds of homes and other structures, burned almost 300,000 acres, and caused widespread power outages that forced the closure of major highways and local roads. In addition, a storm system swept across Southern California after the fires that brought high winds, substantial precipitation, and flooding to Santa Barbara County. This led to devastating flash flooding, erosion, and substantial mud and debris flows throughout the burn scar areas and forced the evacuation of residents. This tragic event resulted in 21 fatalities, damaged critical infrastructure, destroyed homes, and also forced the closure of major highways and local roads, including Highway 101.

The fires and debris flows in Southern California occurred after events in Northern California. As a result, counties in Southern California are continuing to recover and are in the process of completing debris removal and finalizing their estimates. As such, we would request that the waiver for the local cost share for debris removal be included in the budget for Ventura, Los Angeles, San Diego and Santa Barbara counties in addition to the Northern California Counties.

We thank you and your staff for your efforts on behalf of the people of California and for your prompt consideration of these requests. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 916-327-7500, ext. 504, or cmartinson@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cara B. Martinson', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Cara B. Martinson
Senior Legislative Representative

cc: Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Members, Assembly Budget Committee
Renita Polk, Consultant, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Susan Chan, Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee