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**SENATE COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**  
**Senator Henry Stern**  
**Chair**  
**2025 - 2026 Regular**

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**Bill No:** AJR 27 **Hearing Date:** 6/16/2026  
**Author:** Harabedian  
**Version:** 6/11/2026 Amended  
**Urgency:** **Fiscal:** No  
**Consultant:** Cassie Royce

**SUBJECT:** Federal disaster aid: 2025 Los Angeles fires

**SUMMARY:** Urges the President of the United States to immediately submit a supplemental disaster declaration to Congress to unlock supplemental funding for the 2025 Los Angeles firestorm recovery and calls on Congress to approve supplemental aid to support the County of Los Angeles.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

Establishes the federal Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, which authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide emergency assistance to states and local entities impacted by disasters, as specified. In an emergency, the President may, among other things, authorize public assistance programs to provide essential emergency assistance, repair and restore damaged public infrastructure, and remove debris.

This resolution:

- 1) Resolves that the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, urge the President of the United States to immediately submit a supplemental disaster declaration to Congress to unlock funding to aid in recovery from the Los Angeles fires.
- 2) Resolves that the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, call on Congress to approve supplemental aid to support the County of Los Angeles, regardless of whether it receives a request from the President of the United States.

- 3) States that on January 7, 2025, the Eaton Fire and the Palisades Fire in the County of Los Angeles, began forcing evacuations and devastating communities in the County of Los Angeles, as specified.
- 4) States that in the immediate aftermath of the fires, the County of Los Angeles received federal support following a major disaster declaration by President Joseph R. Biden, as specified.
- 5) States that President Donald J. Trump demanded unrelated and unprecedented policy changes as a condition for receiving further federal aid, as specified.
- 6) States that Governor Newsom sent formal request letters to Congress and the Trump administration requesting a supplemental appropriation of over \$39 million for disaster funding to aid the County of Los Angeles in recovery, as specified, which was later revised to reflect work already paid out.
- 7) States that federal assistance is critical to ensure the County of Los Angeles has all the necessary resources to fund the rebuilding of homes, schools, and community facilities, support the local economy, repair infrastructure damage, and other recovery needs, as specified.
- 8) States that the full bipartisan California congressional delegation has supported federal aid for recovery in the County of Los Angeles, including in a letter signed by all sitting California members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate.
- 9) States that meeting the recovery needs of the County of Los Angeles will require supplemental aid, and that cannot be provided without Congress and President Trump.
- 10) States that President Trump has refused to respond to California's request and has failed to submit a funding proposal to Congress.
- 11) States that Congress and Presidents of both parties have historically approved supplemental aid after natural disasters with bipartisan support and no conditions, including aiding Florida after Hurricanes Helene and Milton in 2024.
- 12) Resolves that the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, each Senator and Representative

from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

## Background

*Author Statement.* According to the author’s office, “[Over a] year after the Eaton and Palisades fires devastated Los Angeles, Americans in Los Angeles are still in desperate need of federal aid to assist rebuilding. AJR 27 calls upon the President and Congress to unlock funding for Los Angeles so our communities can recover from the fires.”

*Los Angeles Fires.* In January 2025, Los Angeles County was hit by multiple catastrophic wildfires, of which the Palisades and Eaton Fires were the most destructive. The Palisades Fire started in the Santa Monica Mountains and caused major destruction in Pacific Palisades (a neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles), Topanga (an unincorporated area of LA County), and the City of Malibu. It burned 23,448 acres, destroying nearly 7,000 structures and damaging an additional 973 structures. The Eaton Fire started in the Eaton Canyon area of the San Gabriel Mountains and was driven by Santa Ana winds into several foothill communities, particularly Altadena (an unincorporated area of LA County). It burned 14,000 acres, destroying more than 9,000 structures and damaging an additional 1,074 structures. Both fires were brought to full containment by January 31<sup>st</sup>.

*Presidential Major Disaster Declaration.* On January 8, 2025, former President Biden approved a Major Disaster Declaration (MDD) for California, following Governor Newsom’s proclaimed State of Emergency for Los Angeles and Ventura Counties due to the fire and windstorm conditions from January 2025. The MDD provided disaster assistance to supplement recovery efforts in the areas affected by wildfires and winds from January 7<sup>th</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup>. Available federal funding to affected individuals in LA County included grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster. Federal funding was also made available to state, tribal and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for debris removal and emergency protective measures, including direct federal assistance.

*State funding.* In January 2025, the Legislature and Governor took swift budget action to provide \$2.5 billion for recovery efforts related to damage caused by the Eaton and Palisades Fires. As noted by the Department of Finance, these communities face a long and complex recovery process, requiring significant state

and federal support to rebuild safely and restore services. Recovery operations include managing emergency protective measures, such as evacuations, sheltering for survivors, and traffic control; performing debris and waste removal; supporting post-fire hazard assessments, remediation and environmental testing; and providing public assistance to repair infrastructure and supporting continuous liaison activities to help the impacted communities navigate FEMA assistance.

*Funding Request Letters.* Governor Newsom has sent letters to Congress and the Trump administration to request a disaster funding supplemental appropriation to bolster LA County's recovery. The original letter, sent in February 2025, requested nearly \$40 billion in assistance. As of March 2026, the request from California for federal aid for LA fire recovery reflects revised estimates, based on current circumstances and close coordination with local stakeholders for immediate advancement of aid for a targeted set of the highest priority federal programs, as follows:

- a) Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery: \$10.5B
- b) Economic Development Administration Business Grants: \$179M
- c) Child Care Development Block Grant: \$240M
- d) Clean Water State Revolving Fund: \$202M
- e) Transportation Infrastructure: \$156M
- f) FEMA Public Assistance: \$3B in eligible projects
- g) FEMA Hazard Mitigation: \$750M
- h) Small Business Administration Loans: Increase loan limits and create flexible disbursement and repayment rules to support residents throughout reconstruction

According to the Governor's Office, these figures and flexibility requests reflect strong alignment with local priorities and incorporate specific projects and needs identified by local governments and residents.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation:      Fiscal Com.:      No      Local:

**SUPPORT:**

California Professional Firefighters

**OPPOSITION:**

None on file

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** In support of the resolution, the California Professional Firefighters, writes that, “There has been strong bipartisan interest in providing assistance to the citizens and communities of Los Angeles that our members have sworn to protect, and we strongly support all efforts to ensure that this funding reaches the people who need it most. For these reasons, we are proud to support this important measure.”