



January 21, 2025

Senate President Pro Tempore Mike McGuire  
1021 O Street, Ste. 8518  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assembly Budget Chair Jesse Gabriel  
1021 O Street, Ste. 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas  
1021 O Street, Ste. 8330  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senate Budget Chair Scott Wiener  
1021 O Street, Ste. 8620  
Sacramento, CA 95818

**Re: Support for Special Session Bill Package to Provide \$2.5 Billion for Los Angeles Wildfire Response, Important Planning and Recovery Efforts**

Dear Senate President Pro Tempore McGuire, Assembly Speaker Rivas, Assembly Budget Chair Gabriel, and Senate Budget Chair Wiener:

The American Planning Association, California Chapter would like to express our support for the wildfire special session bills, ABX1 4 (Gabriel) /SBX1 4 (Wiener), ABX1 5 (Gabriel) and SBX1 3 (Wiener), as a package, which will provide \$2.5 billion in funding for Los Angeles County's wildfire response and recovery, in addition to supporting critical planning work that's needed to help communities impacted by the devastating fires that ravaged many parts of the County earlier this month. APA California continues to look for ways to provide support and resources to those impacted by the fires and we believe this funding is key.

**Response, Planning and Recovery Efforts in Los Angeles is Critical**

APA California is a non-profit organization made up of practicing planners, citizens and public officials committed to advancing the practice of local, regional, and statewide planning throughout urban, suburban, and rural California. Funding through the special session bill package comes at a time when planners are preparing to play an important role in helping with the recovery efforts in the Cities of Los Angeles, Malibu, Pasadena, and the County of Los Angeles. While the full impact of the fires is not yet known, we do know they have displaced thousands of residents from their homes, schools and businesses. Even beyond the areas directly affected, there will likely be long-lasting regional impacts that planners will need to grapple with more broadly. APA California is especially appreciative of the funding provided for planning review and building inspection resources for the purpose of expediting building approvals during the recovery period. The state's direct support of these important planning recovery efforts is critical, in consideration of ongoing "business as usual" planning and permitting required by many state laws that have passed in the last several years.

**Broader Conversations on Planning Efforts for Creating Resilient Communities**

It's also important to highlight the need to broadly support planning at the local and regional level, whether it be in response to a disaster or to address our long-standing housing and climate crisis. The fires in Los Angeles are a reminder that the impacts from climate change will continue to effect Californians and how we live in our communities. Addressing the housing crisis while preparing for more resilient communities is a shared goal and something that planners are working hard to do, but they need tools and resources to help the Legislature achieve the outcomes that everyone desires. As adopted in APA California's Legislative Platform, *Plan California*, our organization is supportive of efforts to provide



American Planning Association  
**California Chapter**

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resources and funding for local evaluation and mitigation of hazards and risks associated with climate change, and to provide resources to plan for and fund affordable housing and infrastructure in communities throughout the state. The Los Angeles fires have only compounded the housing crisis, and we know that more work will need to be done to create sustainable communities throughout California.

APA California would like to thank the Governor and the Legislature for supporting Los Angeles at all levels. We continue to offer our organization as a resource in future conversations, even beyond recovery efforts, to ensure we are planning safe and resilient communities, all while continuing to address California's housing crisis. Planners up and down the state are mobilizing to support one another and we appreciate the state's partnership through this bill package. We look forward to working with the Legislature and the Administration on this issue and if you have any questions, please contact our lobbyist, Lauren De Valencia, with Stefan/George Associates at [lauren@stefangeorge.com](mailto:lauren@stefangeorge.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Reuben Duarte'.

Reuben Duarte  
Vice President Policy and Legislation  
APA California