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**M E M O R A N D U M**

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**To:** East Contra Costa Fire Protection District  
**From:** Townsend Public Affairs  
**Date:** November 1, 2018  
**Subject:** Monthly Report for the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District— October 2018

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**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

Fire Prevention and Safety

This month, Chief Brian Helmick received notification from FEMA that the District's application for a risk assessment under the Fire Prevention and Safety program was not awarded. On Thursday, October 25, 2018, Chief Brian Helmick, Battalion Chief Ross Macumber, and Regina Rubier from the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District (ECCFPD) and Sharon Gonsalves and Zac Commins from Townsend Public Affairs (TPA) joined a phone call with officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to discuss ECCFPD's Fiscal Year 2017 Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) application for funds to conduct a community risk assessment.

- Call Summary
  - Julia Barron was the lead contact from FEMA and covered the feedback from the application's three peer reviewers. Ms. Barron said the application was scored very well overall but was not scored high enough compared to other applications to receive an award.
    - Note: Only 63 of more than 800 applications were successful.
  - Ms. Barron suggested that the cost/benefit section could be improved by extrapolating what ECCFPD can do with the project, particularly in identifying community risks and how identifying those risks can help save lives and save money. Ms. Barron also suggested to provide a projected month-by-month breakdown of how the project would be implemented.
- Next Steps
  - The projected deadline for Fiscal Year 2018 FP&S applications is Friday, December 7 at 2:00 p.m. PT.
  - Risk Assessment will once again be a high priority for FEMA.
  - TPA plans to meet with the District on November 12 to discuss ways to improve the application and gather additional information for this upcoming FP&S funding opportunity, including expanding the cost/benefit and statement of effect sections.

Assistance to Firefighters

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) Grant program opened on September 24, 2018. The AFG program provides financial assistance to help fire departments, nonaffiliated Emergency Medical Service (EMS) organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTAs) for critically needed resources to protect the public, to train emergency personnel, and to foster interoperability and

support community resilience. It also aims to enhance the safety of the public and to provide a continuum of support for emergency responders regarding fire, medical, and all hazard events.

TPA worked with District staff to prepare two applications that will meet the high priorities of the agency. The first was a regional application where the District partnered with Contra Costa Fire District to submit an application that could be mutually beneficial and be viewed as more competitive. If awarded, ECCFPD and ConFire would purchase a total of 21 sauna units. This purchase would help reduce the risk of cancer for ECCFPD and ConFire personnel and support their ability to protect lives and property in the region. This request also aligns with AFG's high programmatic priority for the purchase of responder rehab equipment.

The second application is to replace the district's 15 current portable radios that are now obsolete, and the radio manufacturer no longer makes replacement parts for these models. If awarded, ECCFPD would replace its existing set with new, state-of-the-art, fully-functioning portable radios. These new radios would help ECCFPD comply with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards 1221 and 1561, and have Project 25 (P25) compatibility, both of which are high AFG priorities. This purchase would directly enhance responder safety and improve ECCFPD's ability to protect life and property in the region.

Applications were submitted on October 25, 2018. TPA is now working to secure letters of support to FEMA from your federal representatives.

### **State Political Update**

With the Legislature having adjourned, and the Governor having taken action on all pending legislation, most of the focus in the Capitol for the past month has been on the upcoming November General Election. Legislative leadership has been focused on a handful of races across the State that are likely to determine whether or not the Democrats will hold a two-thirds super-majority when they begin the new session in December. At the same time, Governor Brown has focused most of his efforts on defeating Proposition 6, which aims to repeal the transportation infrastructure package that he negotiated with the Legislature in 2017.

Below is a list of upcoming dates in the Legislature:

- **November 6** – 2018 General Election
- **December 3** – Swearing-in of Newly Elected Legislators

### **State Economic Update**

In October, the California Department of Finance released its latest economic and revenue report. The report indicated that the State's unemployment rate remained at a record-low 4.2 percent for the fifth-straight month. The U.S unemployment rate dropped to 3.7 percent, the lowest it has been since 1969. Contributing to the low unemployment, the State added 44,800 jobs, representing more than 20 percent of all jobs added in the U.S last month. Growing industry sectors include educational and health services, professional and business services, government, construction, and trade. California personal income for the first half of 2018 grew at 4.5 percent, mirroring slight wage growth.

General Fund agency cash for the first three months of the fiscal year was \$1.032 billion higher than the forecast of \$27.51 billion based on higher than expect revenues. Personal income tax revenues for the first three months of the fiscal year were \$990 million above forecast. Corporate

tax revenues were \$66 million above forecast. Sales and use tax receipts for the first three months of the fiscal year were \$61 million below forecast, suggesting a slight decline in consumer spending.

## Election Update

### *Statewide Elections*

In October, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) released the results of its statewide survey. Heading into the election, this survey indicates that 48 percent of Californians approve of Governor Brown's job performance. With Governor Brown terming out this year, Democratic Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom holds an 11-point lead over John Cox in the upcoming Gubernatorial Race. California Incumbent Senator Democrat Dianne Feinstein leads her opponent, fellow Democrat Kevin De Leon 43 percent to 27 percent.

### *Proposition 6*

Proposition 6, the repeal of recently enacted fuel taxes and vehicles fees, faces an uphill climb as a majority of like voters indicate they would vote "No" (48 percent to 41 percent). Support for the repeal effort is highest in Orange and San Diego Counties (52 percent) and lowest in the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area (36 percent each). The California Professional Firefighters and the California State Firefighters Association have taken an oppose position on Proposition 6.

## Federal Legislative Update

October saw most members of Congress make a quick departure to campaign before the midterms. Although Congress spent the majority of the month in recess, negotiations on the Farm Bill and spending measures continued.

### Budget and Appropriations

While Congress is out of session leading up to the midterm election on November 6, we wanted to provide you an update on the federal appropriations process and current proposed funding levels for your priority programs.

### Status:

- President Trump has signed 5 of the 12 federal appropriations bills for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 into law.
- President Trump also signed a continuing resolution, which extended FY 2018 funding levels for remaining authorized programs through December 7, 2018.
- After the midterm election, the House and Senate will return to finish work on the remaining 7 bills (Agriculture; Commerce, Justice, Science; Financial Services; Homeland Security; Interior-Environment; State-Foreign Operations; Transportation-Housing and Urban Development).
- Due to differences between the House and Senate versions of these remaining bills, congressional leaders must work to resolve these variations before they can be sent to the White House for the President's signature.

- Of the remaining bills, the Homeland Security bill is the most controversial due to disagreements on immigration and border security spending. It is the only bill that has not received a vote on the House or Senate floor. It is this bill that funding for FEMA falls under. TPA continues to communicate to members of Congress how critical funding for FEMA is and fortunately that portion of the bill remains bipartisan.

TPA continues to work with congressional leaders to advocate for your priority programs as they work to finalize these funding levels. TPA is also monitoring the midterm election and how its results, particularly any shifts in control of the House or Senate, may affect the appropriations process when Members return to Washington in mid-November.

### **Looking Forward**

As we prepare for the 2019/2020 Legislative session, TPA will work with the district to update the legislative platform and begin discussions for potential legislation for the year ahead. Our legislative strategy will support the strategic plan that the board can expect to adopt after the election. As several changes will be occurring, TPA will begin scheduling meeting to get acquainted with the new administration.

