
M E M O R A N D U M

To: East Contra Costa Fire Protection District
From: Townsend Public Affairs
Date: August 3, 2018
Subject: Monthly Report for the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District— July 2018

Fire Foundation Grant

On July 5, 2018, the District received notice that the California Fire Foundation approved a grant in the amount of \$13,864.31 to the District. This grant will support the purchase of specialized battery powered firefighting equipment. The application was submitted on June 15th, 2018.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

TPA received an update that FEMA will announce awards for its Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grant Program in mid-August. As a reminder the district applied for an FP&S grant to fund a community risk assessment. TPA has secured letters of support from Senator Kamala Harris and Congressman Jerry McNerney and they have been submitted to FEMA.

State Political Update

In the month of July, after the policy committee deadline on July 6, the Legislature adjourned for Summer Recess. They will return on August 6 and will have less than four weeks until the session ends on August 31. Once the Legislature adjourns for the year, the Governor will have until September 30 to sign or veto any legislation.

Below is a list of upcoming dates in the Legislature:

- **August 6 – Legislature reconvenes from Summer Recess**
- **August 17 – Last day for fiscal committees to meet and report bills**
- **August 24 – Last day to amend bills on the Floor**
- **August 31- Last day for each House to pass bills**
- **September 30 – Last day for Governor to sign or veto bills**

Last Month of Session

While the month of July was slow due to the legislative summer recess, looking ahead to the last month of the legislative session there are several open items that will be discussed. A few of those priority items include emergency preparedness and wildfire safety.

Emergency Preparedness and Statewide Wildfires

Legislators introduced more than 70 bills this session to address fire related policies such as forest management, vegetation management near utility equipment, utility liability and residential property insurance. Following some of the most destructive wildfires in California history, Governor Brown and legislative leaders announced plans to improve disaster preparedness. In March, Governor Brown committed to delivering a solution that would make California more resilient against future disasters. Building on this effort, and in the wake of the continued fires, Senate Pro-Tem Toni Atkins and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon convened a 10-member joint conference committee to work on the complex issues related to wildfires.

The members of the Joint Legislative Committee are as follows:

Senator Bill Dodd (Napa) – Co-Chair
Senator Anthony Cannella (Ceres)
Senator Ben Hueso (San Diego)
Senator Hannah Beth Jackson (Santa Barbara)
Senator Jeff Stone (Riverside County)

Assemblymember Chris Holden (Pasadena) – Co-Chair
Assemblymember Brian Dahle (Bieber)
Assemblymember Eloise Reyes (San Bernardino)
Assemblymember Chad Mayes (Yucca Valley)
Assemblymember Jim Wood (Healdsburg)

Senate Bill 901 (Senator Bill Dodd, D-Napa) was moved to the conference committee for further discussion and analysis. SB 901 will be the vehicle used to implement any changes agreed to by the Wildfire Preparedness and Response Conference Committee. Currently, the language of the bill includes findings and declarations to guide the work of the Committee.

The conference committee met on July 25 and heard from policy area experts, including leadership from the CPUC and CalFire. The committee expressed several concerns, including the need to balance fire prevention with efforts to help victims of the current fires. Looking ahead to August, the committee will consider updating rules for utility services, including steps to remove vegetation around power lines and temporarily shutting off power during extreme weather events. The committee will also look at ways to make sure those who play a role in causing wildfires are held accountable. This will be a major discussion during the last month of session.

On July 24, Governor Brown released his proposal to prevent wildfires and deal with the rising cost of wildfires to the public. The key elements of the Governor's proposal are:

- Requiring utilities to strengthen and enhance the construction, maintenance and operation of their electrical lines and equipment to further reduce the risk of wildfire.
- Mandating that utilities adopt more expansive wildfire prevention plans.
- Holding utilities accountable for implementing their safety plans by increasing state oversight of those plans and increasing state penalties for safety violations.
- Providing a framework for judges to use when determining liability for wildfires.
- Continuing to hold accountable those who are at fault for causing wildfires.
- Requiring stronger wildfire prevention strategies, such as utility company inspections, infrastructure maintenance and temporary shut-off of power during extreme weather.

Upcoming hearings for the Conference Committee on Wildfire Preparedness and Response:

- August 7, 2018
- August 9, 2018

Federal Legislative Update

In July, Congress worked to move appropriations bills forward while also preparing for recess in the House. The House approved as many non-controversial bills as possible before their recess began on July 27. The Senate will recognize only a short two-week recess in August in order to maximize their time on appropriations bills.

Budget and Appropriations

In July, Congress continued to work to advance appropriations legislation to fund the federal government in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019. So far, none of the 12 traditional spending bills have been signed into law by President Trump. Congressional leaders have begun to package these spending bills together to avoid a government shutdown on October 1, 2018.

President Trump, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and House Speaker Paul Ryan met in July to discuss their appropriations strategy for the remainder of the year. This will involve attempting to pass as many funding bills as possible by the September 30 deadline, and passing a continuing resolution to keep the government running through the midterm election in November.

Thanks to continued advocacy, we are still seeing proposed funding levels for FY 2019 to be the same as FY 2018 levels. TPA is continuing to work with congressional leaders to support robust funding for your federal funding priorities.

Bills of Interest

Assembly Bill 1912 (Rodriguez) is designed to eliminate the ability to reduce liability for members of JPAs by contractually altering their obligations regarding debts, liabilities and other obligations with other parties to the JPA. **This bill has been amended to remove the opposition of California Special District's Association.**

Assembly Bill 2065 (Ting) would require special districts to offer their land for development before leasing their property. AB 2065 requires special districts and other local agencies to offer the right of first refusal to affordable housing developers, schools, and parks before selling, leasing, or otherwise conveying their land. The new requirements in the bill would be very problematic for many public agencies that have valid reasons to lease or otherwise protect land they own. **District has taken an oppose position and this bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.**

Assembly Bill 2118 (Cooley) establish an Inter-Governmental Transfer (IGT) program for public emergency Medi-Cal transportation providers is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Assembly Bill 2293 (Reyes) would remove requirements, which prevent convicted felons from meeting EMT requirements. This bill will next be heard in Senate Appropriations on August 6, 2018.

Assembly Bill 2333 (Wood) would establish a behavioral health director at OES to ensure individuals have access to behavioral health support following a natural disaster. This bill is currently in Senate Appropriations.

Assembly Bill 2380 (Aguiar-Curry) would require OES to develop regulations for privately contracted private fire prevention companies operating in California. This bill is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Assembly Bill 2551 (Wood) would require CAL FIRE to establish a Forest and Wildland Health Improvement and Fire Prevention Program. The bill would require the department to take specified actions to implement and administer programs that are intended to promote forest and wildland health, restoration, and resilience, and improve fire outcomes, prevention, and preparedness throughout the state. The bill would also require the department, to the extent feasible, to collaborate with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to utilize correctional officers and conservation crews for vegetation management and fire prevention activities. This bill is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Assembly Bill 2961 (O'Donnell) would establish an ambulance patient offload time report and provide recommendations to reduce wall time. This bill This bill is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Senate Bill 833 (McGuire) would establish a red alert system to coordinate alerts following an evacuation order. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Senate Bill 901 (Dodd) would require utility company wildfire mitigation plans to include policies to deenergize lines and protocols to notify customers of such action. This bill has been moved to the Joint Legislative Conference Committee on Emergency Preparedness and Wildfire Management.

Senate Bill 929 (McGuire) which would require that all special districts maintain a website. This bill will grant the public with greater access to their services, and greater transparency and accountability of the governing bodies who oversee them. **The District has taken a support position. This bill is currently on the consent calendar on the Assembly floor.**

Senate Bill 1088 (Dodd) would require OES to adopt standards and policies applicable to utility companies to reduce the risk of fire during major events. This bill is in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Senate Bill 1226 (Bates) This bill requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to propose a building standard that permits local building officials to issue a retroactive building permit for an existing residential unit for which a permit does not exist and apply the building standards that were in place when the unit was constructed. This bill is on the Assembly Appropriations Suspense File.

Senate Bill 1415 (McGuire) is the Ghost Ship Building Fire Task Force bill to require inspections of factory buildings which are now occupied by residents and authorizes a fee to recover costs of the inspection or for related fire and safety activities. This bill is on the Assembly floor.