

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 22, 2020

The Honorable Fiona Ma
California State Treasurer
915 Capitol Mall
Room 110
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Honorable Fiona Ma:

We are writing regarding provisions in Public Law 116-94 that provide additional low-income housing credit allocations to the State of California for 2017 and 2018 disaster areas. As your office determines how to allocate these resources it may be helpful to understand the intent behind why these additional tax credits were included in this legislation.

As you know, in 2017 the North Bay was devastated by a series of intense wildfires. The North Bay wildfires alone destroyed nearly 6,000 homes. Many of these homes that were destroyed were occupied by low-income renters. That same year California was hit with another devastating wildfire in Ventura County. At the time, these fires represented the worst destruction of homes in California's history. Tragically, this record was surpassed in 2018 with the Camp Fire in Butte County. This fire saw the destruction of over 11,000 homes. Together, nearly 20,000 homes were destroyed by the wildfires in 2017 and 2018.

In order to assist with the wildfire recovery, we worked with community stakeholders and initiated legislation to provide additional tax credits to the impacted communities so the affordable housing that was destroyed during the disasters could be replaced. In advocating for the additional allocation of tax credits, we were clear they were intended to provide relief to those who are struggling to recover from these tragic wildfire events.

The 2017 North Bay fires saw the destruction of a 162-unit mobile home park in Santa Rosa called Journey's End. Seniors living on a fixed income, many on Social Security, primarily occupied the park. During the fires, five people died, and the mobile home park was destroyed. The result was that these individuals were displaced and have had to live in temporary housing since the fires. These critically needed tax credits would be used to build permanent senior affordable housing that would be made available to those individuals who were displaced.

In addition, the legislation as enacted specifically states that “qualified 2017 and 2018 California disaster areas” means any area in California which was determined by the President (before January 1, 2019) to warrant individual or individual and public assistance from the Federal Government under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act by reason of a major disaster the incident period of which begins or ends in calendar year 2017 and 2018. That means California counties would not be “qualified 2017 and 2018 California disaster areas” if only public assistance was received.”

Accordingly, and as intended, Butte, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Sonoma, Yuba, Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Shasta counties would be the only counties to qualify under this legislation because these are the only counties that received individual, or individual and public assistance.

In light of the destruction and the loss of affordable housing that occurred during the 2017 and 2018 wildfires in these specific counties, we request that you take into consideration the legislative language and the intent of this allocation and ensure that the communities mentioned above, impacted by the 2017 and 2018 wildfire disasters receive these critical resources needed to recover.

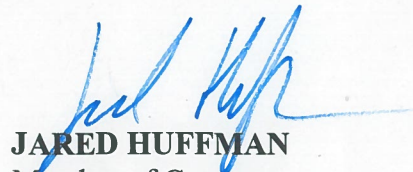
Sincerely,



MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress



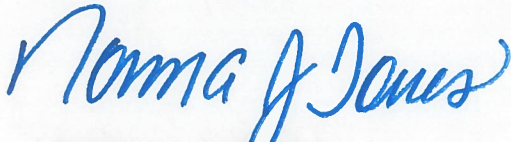
DOUG LAMALFA
Member of Congress



JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress



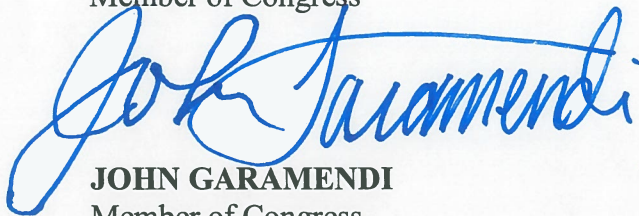
GILBERT R. CISNEROS, JR.
Member of Congress



NORMA J. TORRES
Member of Congress



SCOTT PETERS
Member of Congress



JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress



ALAN LOWENTHAL
Member of Congress

HARLEY ROUDA
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JULIA BROWNLEY
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LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ
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BRAD SHERMAN
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TED W. LIEU
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JUAN VARGAS
Member of Congress

TONY CÁRDENAS
Member of Congress

GRACE F. NAPOLITANO.
Member of Congress

J. LUIS CORREA
Member of Congress

Susan A. Davis

SUSAN A. DAVIS
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jimmy Gomez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

JIMMY GOMEZ
Member of Congress