

January 20, 2026



LEAGUE OF
**CALIFORNIA
CITIES**

Strengthening California Cities
through Advocacy and Education

Overview of the League of California Cities

Melissa Sparks-Kranz, Legislative Advocate
msparkskranz@calcities.org or 916-658-8232

Cal Cities

- Established in 1898 (128 years)
- **Mission:** *Expand and protect local control for cities through education and advocacy to enhance the quality of life for all Californians.*

483

California
Cities

16

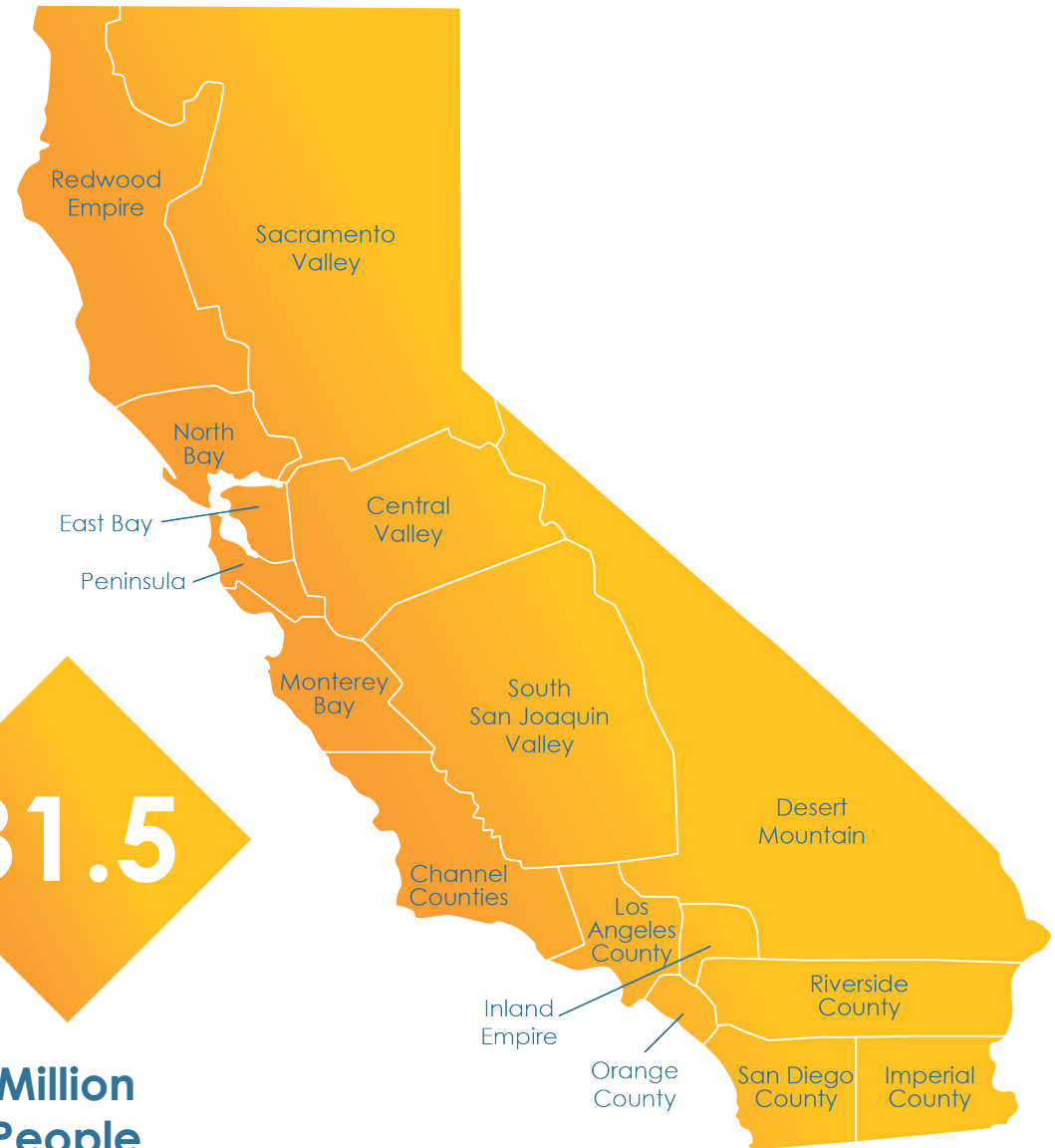
Regional
Divisions

83%

State
Population

31.5

Million
People

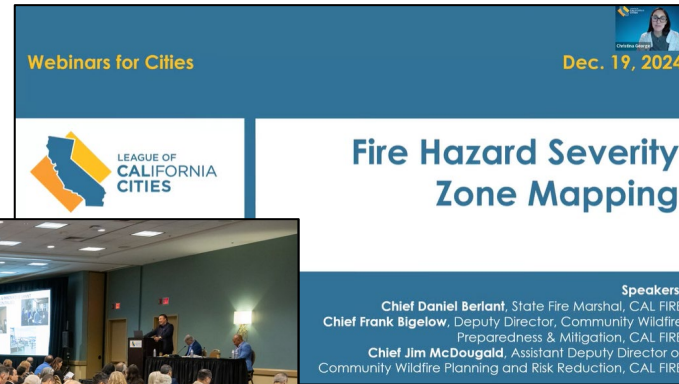


Education

- Cal Cities hosts many events (conferences, webinars, and roundtables) and produces news stories/media to communicate widely to help address the educational needs of local elected officials, city department heads, and their staff.



**Municipal
Departments/
Conferences**



Education

Paso Robles' fire risk mitigation strategies are nothing to kid about.



Cal Cities **ADVOCATE**

News and events from the League of California Cities

October 29, 2025

[Paso Robles' fire risk mitigation strategy is nothing to kid about](#)



The city of Paso Robles dramatically reduced the number of goats and sheep herded through dense undergrowth. [Read more](#)

OCTOBER 2025 | The Magazine of the League of California Cities

WESTERN *City*

Special Edition

IT'S 10 P.M. AND
A CRISIS HAS HIT YOUR CITY.
Can you communicate with
your residents effectively?

People want to
have kids and live
downtown. Can they?

Good relationships
make for good
governance

Bubbles
g ripple
Ethereal
y.com



Login City Job Board Cal Cities Partners ▾ CitiPAC CSCDA California CLASS ILG Western City

Advocacy Education and Events Get Involved News Resources About Us

California cities go above and beyond mutual aid to help communities impacted by the Los Angeles wildfires


Jan 29, 2025

By Brian Hendershot, Cal Cities Advocate managing editor

#LocalWorks

Cities throughout California responded en masse to the devastating fires that ripped through the Los Angeles metropolitan area and surrounding regions earlier this month.

The most visible response efforts were the thousands of firefighters deployed to the area, with many crews driving through the night. "The conditions down there are so horrific that our members were put straight to work, and they have not stopped working ever since," Captain Justin Sylvia with the Sacramento Fire Department told *ABC 10* earlier this month. Orange County Fire Authority Chief Brian Fennessy, one of the many Orange County firefighters active in the area, even saved two homes with beer and milk.



Many cities also set up relief efforts. Truckee Town Council Member



INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTSM

Promoting Good Government at the Local Level



INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTSM

Promoting Good Government at the Local Level

REDUCING YOUR COMMUNITY'S WILDFIRE RISK

A **free** webinar series for local government staff & elected officials



Join us for a series of four free webinars, starting in September 2025. You will learn from subject matter experts and real-world practitioners about the action steps you can take to minimize your community's wildfire risk.

This series is hosted by the Institute for Local Government, in partnership with:



Renne Public Law Group[®] MANAGEMENT GROUP

2026 Cal Cities Advocacy Priorities



- Protect and enhance **local revenues** and expand economic development tools
- Strengthen partnerships with the state to improve **public safety**
- Secure investments to prevent and **reduce homelessness** and increase the supply of **affordable housing**
- Strengthen **climate change resiliency** and **disaster preparedness**

Advocacy



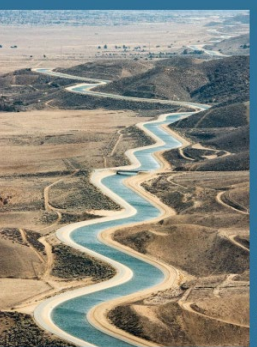
- Legislative & Policy Advocacy
- Legal Advocacy
- Ballot Issues



LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES

A Guide to Proposition 4:

The Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024



Published: August 2024

YES on 4

Prevent wildfires. Provide safe drinking water. Protect California.



California is facing devastating wildfires, vulnerable drinking water supplies, extreme summer heat, and other major threats from a changing climate.

Proposition 4 makes urgent investments in proven solutions to protect our communities, health, and economy. It addresses threats to our iconic landscapes, coast, and wildlife before the damage becomes too costly and unmanageable.

Prop 4 tackles our most urgent needs today, helping us protect California and what makes our state so special.

Prevent Devastating Wildfires and Smoke

Recent California wildfires have burned over 2 million acres, affecting our quality of life and health. A UCLA study found that 10 years of wildfire smoke have caused 50,000 premature deaths and \$400 billion in economic losses.

YES on 4 is a major step forward, investing in proven strategies to detect, prevent, and reduce the intensity and spread of fires in every region. In 2024, we've seen the return of huge, damaging fires that strain our state's capacity to respond.

- **Protects communities** by creating natural breaks and removing burnable brush around populated areas
- **Increases forest health** to reduce wildfire intensity
- **Improves early detection** and disaster response, deploying detection and early warning systems
- **Enhances safety** by upgrading available firefighting equipment, emergency communications, evacuation routes, and shelter availability

Provide Safe, Reliable Drinking Water & Boosting Supplies

We can't take our water supplies for granted. A changing climate, more frequent droughts, crumbling infrastructure, and water pollution are putting our supplies under pressure. A recent state study found that a changing climate could reduce key water sources more than 20% in the years ahead.

YES on 4 addresses these water supply challenges and takes important steps to clean our water and safeguard it from pollution.

- **Upgrades vital water infrastructure**
- **Fixes crumbling dams and levees**
- **Restores groundwater supplies**
- **Increases local water recycling programs**
- **Increases stormwater capture**
- **Provides water treatment** to filter harmful contaminants like lead, PFAS chemicals, and perchlorate



February 25, 2025

Senator Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4
1021 O Street, Suite 8200
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Ben Allen
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #2
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Steve Bennett
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4
1021 O Street, Suite 8200
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Request to Amend Governor's Budget Proposal Regarding Proposition 4 Funds

Dear Chair Wiener, Chair Gabriel, Chair Allen, and Chair Bennett:

The undersigned organizations represent the primary funders of the Yes on Proposition 4 Campaign, along with a broader coalition of organizations that support achieving the initiative's goals. Together, we are dedicated to advocating for the thoughtful and efficient implementation of Proposition 4.


We want to thank you for your leadership in the historic \$10 billion investment in the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024. This funding is critical to protecting the state against climate disasters like the devastating firestorms we experienced in Los Angeles last month, supporting critical climate resilience projects across key industries throughout the state and helping California to achieve its 30x30 goals.

However, we write to express our concerns regarding the Governor's proposed budget, specifically the plan to backfill \$73 million in General Fund obligations with Proposition 4 funds. We respectfully urge the Legislature to reject this proposed shift and ensure that Proposition 4 funds are used as outlined in the voter-approved initiative.

Proposition 4 was designed to provide new dedicated funding for climate resiliency projects. Repurposing these funds to backfill General Fund obligations risks undermining the integrity of voter-approved initiatives. Ensuring that these funds remain dedicated to their approved use is essential to maintaining public trust and upholding the commitment made to voters.

Advocacy





Local Responsibility Areas Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map Approval Process

TOP TAKEAWAYS

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is releasing local responsibility area (LRA) maps, designated as moderate, high, or very high in a fire hazard severity zone. Cities will need to:

1

Make the map available for public review and comment within 30 days.

2

Adopt the designation via local ordinance within 120 days.

3

Submit the ordinance to the state within 30 days of local adoption.

What Do the Maps Measure?

The maps show the physical conditions of landscapes, including fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other factors (such as wind) that are major causes of wildfire spread. The maps identify fire hazard potential risk and are designated in three categories: moderate, high, and very high. Catastrophic risk is used as part of the modeling efforts for fire insurance.

Fire "hazard" is based on physical conditions that create a likelihood and expected fire behavior over a 30 to 50-year period without considering mitigation measures such as home hardening, recent wildfires, or fuel reduction.

vs.

Fire "risk" is the potential damage a fire can do to the area under existing conditions, accounting for any modifications such as fuel reduction projects, defensible space, and ignition resistant building construction.

Understanding the LRA Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map Requirements:

Under existing state law ([Government Code Section 51177 to 51179](#)), OSFM is required to designate fire hazard severity zones in the LRA through the release of recommended maps.

Local agencies with designations in their jurisdiction are then required to:

- Within 30 days of receiving the recommended maps, make the information, including the maps, available for public review and comment.
- Adopt the recommended map.
- Enact the ordinance and other required action.
- Reduce the fire hazard severity as identified by OSFM for fire insurance.

Advocacy on Wildfire Issues

- Population growth and housing development
- Fire hazard severity zone maps
- Defensible space and home hardening (Zone Zero)
- Wildfire prevention and planning, evacuation/ egress routes
- CEQA and environmental permitting for fuel reduction projects
- Wildfire/emergency response, mutual aid, and public safety
- Wildfire and disaster recovery/ community rebuild
- Wildfire insurance, wildfire liability
- Fire apparatus and infrastructure needs
- Funding

Melissa Sparks-Kranz, Environmental Quality,
Legislative Advocate at
msparkskranz@calcities.org or 916-658-8232



Strengthening California Cities
through Advocacy and Education

f @calcities

🐦 @calcities

🌐 @calcities.org