

Padilla convenes statewide webinar highlighting best practices for local governments following natural disasters

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U.S. Senator Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) hosted a statewide webinar with the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) to highlight best practices and lessons learned for immediate post-disaster engagement in California. The webinar included representatives from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region IX and the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (CalOES).

“From devastating fires and hurricanes to historic floods and torrential atmospheric rivers, local governments are at the tip of the spear when it comes to response and immediate actions,” said Senator Padilla. “That is why I’ve worked to bring leaders from local, county, state, and federal levels together so that we can help better prepare folks on the ground before extreme weather hits.

“No matter how many disasters we experience, we should always be evaluating processes, sharing lessons learned, and improving our response to better protect our communities and reach vulnerable populations.”

“Climate disasters have become the new normal, and counties – the 3069 throughout the county and 58 here in California – are among the first responders to these emergencies. California State Association of Counties (CSAC) is thankful for U.S. Senator Padilla’s partnership as we relentlessly pursue the safety and security of our residents through community resilience,” said Supervisor James Gore, 2nd District, Sonoma County, National Association of Counties 1st Vice President and past president of the California State Association of Counties.

In light of increasingly catastrophic disasters and severe weather events in California, Senator Padilla has prioritized improving the federal government’s planning for, response to, and mitigation of natural disasters since he entered the Senate.

On Wednesday, the Senate passed Padilla’s amendment directing the Department of Transportation to develop and publish best practices and guidelines for local, state, and Tribal governments to utilize when conducting local emergency evacuation route planning.

In July, Padilla successfully included multiple provisions he authored to expedite the transfer of critical firefighting aircraft to the State of California and to bolster West Coast Atmospheric River forecasting in the Senate’s bipartisan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024.

Padilla has also introduced bipartisan legislation earlier this year to ensure increased flexibility in the cost sharing of federal assistance before and after disaster strikes.