

Legislature passes milestone budget

July 2, 2023



The Senate and Assembly voted overwhelmingly last week to pass the State Legislature’s budget, which will increase public school funding to record levels, bolster funding and accountability to combat the homelessness crisis in our communities, increase funding for wildfire response and prevention, and restore desperately needed funding for coastal communities to combat the climate crisis, all while setting aside a record \$37.2 billion dollars in state reserves.

“Despite a challenging financial climate, the Legislature passed a balanced, forward-thinking budget that won’t result in any cuts to core programming. The document reflects California’s commitment to our kids and strong public schools, combats the homelessness crisis and climate change, and invests funding to bolster wildfire response and prevention in every corner of the state,” said Senate Majority Leader Mike McGuire.

Key provisions to the Legislature’s budget include restoring \$1.25 billion in essential climate funds to be invested in coastal resilience and clean energy projects, including \$102 million for programs at the Coastal Conservancy to combat sea level rise.

To shore up California’s critical wildland firefighting resources, CalFire will receive an additional \$118 million to keep on 500 seasonal firefighters for this fire season to complete vegetation management, hazardous fuel reduction projects, and for wildfire response. The State’s total wildfire response and

prevention multi-year budget is nearly \$3 billion. In the last eight years, the State has expanded CalFire ranks from 6,700 to over 11,300 positions. And in a recent agreement, an additional 1,000 fulltime CalFire firefighters will be hired.

Senator McGuire also stressed the importance of \$2 billion that will be invested to combat the homelessness crisis, and an additional \$2 billion for the Golden State's K-12 public education system.

Additionally, the budget would provide a massive \$5 billion shot in the arm for state transit over the coming three years along with continued funding for homeless encampment cleanup on state highways.

"I'm grateful for the hard work and leadership of Senate President Toni Atkins and budget chair Senator Nancy Skinner, who have gone above and beyond to pass a balanced budget that protects California's progress. The Senate looks forward to additional collaboration with Governor Newsom and his hardworking team," said Senator McGuire.

The budget bill is in print and contained in AB 101 and SB 101.