



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
385 North Arrowhead Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110
(909) 387-4821

July 5, 2012

The Honorable Adam Schiff
House of Representative
2411 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: H.R. 5870 (Schiff), the Disaster Declaration Improvement Act - Support

Dear Congressman Schiff:

The County of San Bernardino is pleased to support H.R. 5870, the Disaster Declaration Improvement Act. This legislation would change Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster recovery assistance qualification criteria after a Presidential disaster declaration.

Last year communities in Southern California suffered over \$30 million in damages from severe windstorms that hit the region. Unfortunately, these communities, including the City of Rancho Cucamonga, did not qualify for federal disaster relief under FEMA's current disaster declaration process. However, had the windstorm damage occurred in a smaller state or county, the cities impacted would likely have been eligible for assistance.

As you are aware, FEMA's current disaster declaration processes uses a series of qualifying thresholds for federal disaster relief determination, in which small and medium sized communities located in large states like California have a particularly difficult time reaching the statewide and county-wide per capita thresholds needed to qualify for federal disaster relief. Considering the size and population of San Bernardino County, this practice makes our region extremely vulnerable.

H.R. 5870 levels the playing field and improves federal disaster response services to communities in crisis. The unique geography and population make up of San Bernardino County, coupled with the unpredictability of natural and manmade disasters, makes this an important piece of legislation to enhance federal emergency response services to the over two million residents residing within the boundaries of San Bernardino County.

For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino is pleased to support H.R. 5870. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Josh Candelaria, Deputy Legislative Director, at (909) 387-4280. The County of San Bernardino thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

[Handwritten signature of Josie Gonzales]

JOSIE GONZALES, Chair
Board of Supervisors

[Handwritten signature of Janice Rutherford]

JANICE RUTHERFORD
Second District Supervisor

The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.