



**COUNTY OF  
SAN BERNARDINO**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Brad Mitzelfelt ..... *First District*  
Paul Biane, Chair ..... *Second District*  
Dennis Hansberger ..... *Third District*  
Gary Ovitt, Vice-Chair ..... *Fourth District*  
Josie Gonzales ..... *Fifth District*

April 10, 2007

The Honorable Christine Kehoe  
39<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 728 (Kehoe)– As amended March 28, 2007 - SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Kehoe:

The Board of Supervisors of San Bernardino County supports SB 728, which would authorize local fire agencies to be reimbursed for the nonfederal share of state eligible costs when responding to a fire incident at the request of the Office of Emergency Services (OES) for which the local fire agency would not otherwise have jurisdictional responsibility.

As you know, when a local jurisdiction has a fire incident -- in most cases a wildland fire -- that has been federally declared eligible for a Federal Management Assistance Grant (FMAG), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) may reimburse state agencies and local governments up to 75% of their eligible fire fighting costs. Unfortunately, the State presently does not have the authority to reimburse local jurisdictions the 25% nonfederal cost share required under FMAG reimbursement criteria.

This legislation grants authority to the State to cover the non-federal share (25%) of the cost of local fire agencies. SB 728 will positively impact the amount of eligible reimbursement that agencies would receive on major mutual aid incidents where cost reimbursements are limited to partial repayment. In order to ensure the California Master Mutual Aid system remains intact, adequate reimbursement for local government is crucial.

In addition, given the current drought conditions experienced throughout the State of California, particularly in Southern California, coupled with the bark beetle infestation and tree mortality crisis in our forests, we formally request this bill be considered an URGENCY BILL and it be considered retroactive to January 1, 2007. For these reasons, the Board of Supervisors of San Bernardino County is in support of SB 728.

Sincerely,

**PAUL BIANE**  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

*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.*