

NEWS

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

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For more information, contact
David Wert, Public Information Officer
(909) 387-4717

dwert@sbcounty.gov



County battles state effort to stall Cedar Glen recovery

The County of San Bernardino is fighting on two fronts against the state's efforts to grab funding meant to rebuild fire-ravaged Cedar Glen.

The County today filed a lawsuit in Sacramento Superior Court to prevent the state Department of Finance from dispersing \$9 million in County General Fund money loaned to the Cedar Glen revitalization effort to various government agencies.

The County is also sponsoring a bill authored by State Sen. Bill Emmerson, SB 409, that would block the Department of Finance money grab and ensure these local dollars are used to help Cedar Glen recover from the 2003 Old Fire.

"The County of San Bernardino made a promise to help Cedar Glen residents rebuild their community long before the state wiped out our redevelopment projects," San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors Chair Janice Rutherford said.

"The legislation introduced by Senator Emmerson would ensure that the County can keep its commitment to the Cedar Glen community and the people who call it home," Supervisor Rutherford said.

"The residents of Cedar Glen have already been through enough. This bill will ensure that the county's resources go towards restoring a community that has been devastated by the Old Fire," Sen. Emmerson said.

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In 2005, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors loaned \$10 million to the Cedar Glen Redevelopment Area to help build roads and a new water system needed to allow residents burned out by the Old Fire to rebuild.

When the state outlawed redevelopment last year, it required that property tax increment once used to revitalize neighborhoods and create jobs be returned and distributed to various government agencies for no specific purpose.

The state Department of Finance has directed that \$9 million in County loan proceeds be treated the same as tax increment and distributed to various government taxing agencies rather than used to rebuild Cedar Glen.

The Board of Supervisors on February 12 passed a resolution reaffirming the County's commitment to use the funding to rebuild Cedar Glen. The lawsuit filed today and Sen. Emmerson's SB 409 will assist in that effort.