



January 12, 2018

**To: Members, California Fire Chiefs Association  
Members, Fire Districts Association of California**

**From: Russell Noack, Public Policy Advocates**

**Re: FIRE Weekly Legislative Report – Week Ending 01/12/2018**

[2018 Legislative Schedule](#)

## Resignations

During the Interim Session, the topic of sexual harassment in the workplace landed squarely at the Capitol, and was met with the hiring of special outside counsel, special informational hearings, the resignations of two legislators – *Assembly Member Raul Bocanegra (D-AD 39)* and *Assembly Member Matt Dababneh (D-AD 45)* – and the sanctioning of a third legislator, *Senator Tony Mendoza (D-SD 32)*.

When the Legislature reconvened on January 3, 2018, Senator Mendoza agreed to temporarily step down from his post until February 1, 2018, pending the outcome of an internal investigation. Another resignation, due to health concerns and effective immediately, was announced by *Assembly Member Sebastian Ridley-Thomas (D-AD 54)*.

The current membership of the Assembly is 52 Democrats, 25 Republicans, and 3 vacancies. Special Elections to fill vacancies and a recall election will be held as follows:

Assembly District 29 – Recall Election of Josh Newman (D) on 06/05/2018  
 Assembly District 39 – Special Primary Election on 04/03/2018  
 Assembly District 45 – Special Election on 06/05/2018  
 Assembly District 54 – Special Election on 06/05/2018

## CFCA/FDAC Meetings at the Capitol

On Tuesday, 01/09/2018, CFCA President Mark Hartwig and FDAC President Steve Hall led a stellar group of representatives from Contra Costa (Chief Carman), Santa Rosa (Chief Gossner), Ventura (Chief Lorenzen), Alameda (Chief Rocha), and Scotts Valley (Chief Kovacs) during meetings in Sacramento with executive staff from the Lieutenant Governor's Office, and nine legislators and staff. Topics of discussion included briefings on the recent wildfires in Northern

and Southern California, discussion of the mutual aid system, and emergency communications. Thank you to all those who participated in these very important meetings.

## Governor's 2018-19 Budget

On Wednesday, 01/10/2018, the Governor released his 2018-19 Budget. There are multiple areas of interest to the Fire Service in the Governor's Budget, including:

- **Cap and Trade Funds:** \$1.25 billion in Cap and Trade dollars are available for appropriation in 2018-19. The Administration will propose the 2018-19 Cap and Trade expenditure plan in the Governor's State of the State address on January 25, 2018.
- **Wildfire Response & Recovery:** Since October 2017, CAL FIRE response costs to wildland fires required a 2017-18 budget augmentation of \$469.3 million, which will be further refined as part of the May Revision. As of December 20, 2017, the Director of Finance accessed \$43.4 million in resources available in the State Fund for Economic Uncertainties for various departments related to unexpected equipment, personnel, and other disaster assistance costs incurred in response to the Governor's State of Emergency Proclamations related to the wildfires.

**Property Tax Backfill:** The Budget includes \$23.7 million General Fund to backfill the property tax revenue losses that cities, counties, and special districts will incur in 2017-18 and 2018-19 due to the October 2017 wildfires in Northern California. This funding estimate will be adjusted as part of the May Revision as more information becomes available from county assessors. This adjustment will also include backfills for the property tax revenue losses incurred by cities, counties, and special districts in 2017-18 and 2018-19 due to the Southern California wildfires that started in December 2017.

**Public Safety Communications:** The Budget proposes \$11.5 million State Emergency Telephone Number Account (SETNA) to modernize the state's current antiquated 9-1-1 system with a Next Generation 9-1-1 system, and improve public safety during emergency events.

To complete the implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1, and temporarily continue the operation of the current 9-1-1 system, the Budget proposes to revise the SETNA fee structure. The SETNA has funded the state's 9-1-1 system since it was built in the 1980s. Due to changes in technology, particularly the increased use of data compared to voice communication, the current SETNA fee model is no longer sufficient to support the legacy 9-1-1 system, or the Next Generation 9-1-1 buildout. Currently, the SETNA fee is charged on intrastate voice plans as a percentage fee on total intrastate calls. The Budget proposes to revise the fee structure to a per-subscription flat-rate on all voice and data plans similar to other states.

As part of additional efforts to improve emergency response telecommunications, the Administration is opting into the federal FirstNet program that will provide dedicated telecommunication spectrum to law enforcement and first responders. The Administration continues to explore opportunities to further strengthen all aspects of emergency telecommunications.

- **Department of Forestry and Fire Protection:** The 2018-19 Budget includes \$2.3 billion (\$1.4 billion General Fund) and 7,014.5 positions for CAL FIRE.

The 2017 Budget Act included: (1) additional ongoing permanent funding of \$42.4 million to expand the state's firefighting capabilities and extend the fire season, and (2) \$200 million of Cap and Trade funds to support healthy and fire resilient forests.

The 2018-19 Budget proposes to continue additional investments to enhance CAL FIRE's capabilities in protecting California residents and safeguarding the property and resources of California.

Significant Adjustments:

- **Helicopter Procurement**—\$97.6 million General Fund to purchase four state-of-the-art helicopters to continue the replacement of CAL FIRE's existing fleet of Vietnam War-era helicopters.
- **McClellan Reload Base**—\$4 million General Fund for 6 permanent positions and 6.1 seasonal positions, to staff and operate the McClellan Reload Base for the rapid deployment of Large Air Tankers, Very Large Air Tankers, and the California National Guard Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems.
- **Ventura Training Center**—\$26.6 million General Fund for CAL FIRE, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and the California Conservation Corps to operate the Firefighter Training and Certification Program for ex-offenders at the Ventura Conservation Camp in Ventura County.

We will continue to follow these and other items of interest as the Budget process continues through June 2018.

## Ghost Ship Fire Informational Hearing

On Thursday, 01/11/2018, Joint Legislative Task Force Chair Chief Mike McLaughlin testified during a Senate Committee on Governance and Finance Informational Hearing (Agenda and Background material attached).

This hearing, one of a series, focused on "Presenting Solutions to Help Local Officials Avoid Another Ghost Ship Fire." Chief McLaughlin participated in a panel discussing ways to better

identify and enforce code violations in substandard buildings. The lack of housing in California – especially affordable housing – will continue to be a major issue before the California Legislature in 2018, with legislators, regulators and local agencies trying to balance housing needs with fire and life safety code enforcement.

## Upcoming Legislative Events and Deadlines

Upcoming legislative events and deadlines, include:

January 15, 2018 – Legislature Closed; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Observed.

January 17, 2018 – Joint Hearing Senate Environmental Quality & Budget Subcommittee #2 (Resources) Re California’s Cap and Trade Program: The Air Resources Board’s 2017 Scoping Plan

January 18, 2018 – Senate Budget Informational Hearing Re Overview of Governor’s 2018-19 Proposed Budget

January 19, 2018 – Last Day for Committees to meet and report bill to Floor introduced in 2017.

January 19, 2018 – Last day to submit bill requests to Legislative Counsel.

January 23, 2018 – Assembly Budget Information Hearing Re Overview of Governor’s 2018 Budget

January 25, 2018 – Governor’s State of the State Address (10:00 a.m.; Assembly Chamber).

January 26, 2018 – Senate Energy Subcommittee on Gas, Electric & Transportation Safety Informational Hearing Re California Burning: Recent Wildfires and Wildfire Prevention and Response Follow-up to November 2015 Wildfire Safety Subcommittee hearing

January 31, 2018 – House of Origin Deadline; last day to pass bills introduced in 2017 to opposite house.

February 16, 2018 – Bill introduction deadline.

February 19, 2018 – Legislature Closed; Presidents’ Day Observed.

February 20, 2018 – Joint Hearing Assembly Committees on Business & Professions, Health and Agriculture Re Cannabis regulation: An update on statewide implementation