

April 24, 2020



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

From: Russell Noack, Public Policy Advocates

Re: FIRE Legislative Report – Week Ending April 24, 2020

### California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC has authorized \$526 Million for Southern California Edison (SCE) Grid Safety and Resiliency Program. The majority of the funds will be used to replace at-risk standard conductors with covered conductors, which have additional layers of insulation. As you know, SCE's electrical equipment was found to be the cause of the devastating Thomas Fire in Ventura County in 2017 and is being investigated for causing the Saddle Ridge Fire in October of last year.

### Legislative Update

As the Legislature prepares to resume business in the Capitol under a strict social distancing protocol, a few bills of interest have been amended:

[Assembly Bill 664 \(Cooper\)](#) is the major COVID-19 urgency measure establishing a conclusive presumption for workers' compensation for state and local firefighters, peace officers, fire and rescue officers and hospital employees who contract COVID-19. Both the FDAC and CFCA have taken support positions on this crucial piece of legislation.

[Assembly Bill 1107 \(Chu\)](#) would, until March 1, 2021, provide that once the temporary federal unemployment increase due to COVID-19 has ceased, a recipient's weekly benefit amount would be increased by \$600, notwithstanding the weekly benefits cap.

[Senate Bill 1159 \(Hill\)](#) would create a presumption of COVID-19 injury for critical workers who have continued to interact with the public within the workers' compensation system.

[Senate Bill 1312 \(McGuire\)](#) would require the PUC to develop a standard for measuring public safety power shutoffs (PSPS) and if the PUC determines the PSPS was not conducted prudently, it would have the authority to levy fines and penalties against the electrical corporation.

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