

United States House of
Representatives
Committee on Financial Services
2129 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
August 31, 2026

The Honorable Cameron Hamilton
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C St SW
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Administrator Hamilton:

In January of 2025, the Pacific Palisades and Eaton Fires took the lives of 31 people and destroyed over 16,000 homes and businesses across Los Angeles.¹ In total, these devastating fires caused over \$60 billion in direct losses—more than any other climate-related U.S. disaster in 2025.² We write to request an update on the review process by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the six Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) projects for the City of Los Angeles and to encourage the prompt obligation of those funds that are ready to process as they are crucial to our communities recovery from these devastating wildfires.

As the largest source of mitigation funding for state and local governments following a disaster, FEMA's HMGP is an essential resource that allows recovering communities to rebuild more resiliently.³ HMGP funds are available and typically awarded to communities following a major disaster declaration or a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) declaration.⁴ California received both designations in the wake of the 2025 L.A. County fires.⁵ However, a year and a half later, FEMA has yet to obligate any of the \$745 million in potential HMGP funding for Los Angeles' recovery under the lock-in ceiling as of the last update to the agency's publicly available database on July 22, 2026.

Awarding funding to these six HMGP projects would strengthen the City's resilience by protecting critical infrastructure, housing, and essential public services from future wildfires, earthquakes and flooding. Specifically, these projects would:

- **LA Fire Department-Fire Code Environmental Compliance Update, FEMA # DR-4856-2097-29:** Upgrade the Los Angeles Fire Department's emergency communications system and support fire hazard evaluations;
- **LA Department of Building and Safety-Post-Wildfire Disaster Code Enforcement Project (One-Stop Center), FEMA # DR-4856-2213-53:** Create a One Stop Recovery Center to cut through red tape for fire-damaged properties in need of repair;
- **LA Housing Department – Home Hardening Residential Retrofit Project, FEMA # DR-4856-2289-113 :** Provide homeowners with rebates to harden and rebuild damaged properties;

¹ Politico, [California leaders promised fire recovery in record time. Los Angeles isn't seeing it.](#), (Apr. 13, 2026).

² Climate Central, [U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters in 2025](#) (Mar. 9, 2026.)[2025 Wildfires Were the Costliest Ever, Researchers Say](#), The New York Times, (May, 31, 2026).

³ Congressional Research Service, [Funding for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance in 2025](#), (Jan. 15, 2026), (IN12642).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Small Business Administration, [Presidential Declaration of a Major Disaster for the State of California](#), 90 FR 6041, (Jan. 17, 2025), see also FEMA, [California Palisades Fire](#), (Jan. 7, 2025), (FM-5549-CA).

- **LA Public Works Bureau of Sanitation – Drainage Project, FEMA # DR-4856-2201-101** : Improve stormwater infrastructure at four high-risk locations to prevent flooding;
- **LA Department of Water and Power – Seismic Retrofits (Tilt-Up Walls), FEMA # DR-4856-2155-96**: Upgrade nine critical Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) substations so they can continue serving the community in the event of an earthquake; and
- **LA Department of Water and Power – Wooden Cable Trench Cover Retrofit, FEMA # DR-4856-2318-117**: Upgrade 21 crucial LADWP substations to withstand future fires.

In response to the urgent concerns of our constituents and local leaders, please provide a response by **Friday, September 4, 2026**. We look forward to your timely update and thank you for your attention to this urgent issue.

Sincerely,



Maxine Waters
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Subcommittee
on Capital Markets

CC: The Honorable French Hill, Chair, U.S. House Committee on Financial Services