

PRESS RELEASE

Congressman Gary G. Miller
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Congressman Miller Urges a Federal Disaster Declaration To Help Southern Californians Affected by Wildfires

Washington, DC – Representatives Gary Miller and Lois Capps and Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, along with 35 of their colleagues, today sent a letter to President Bush supporting the State of California’s request for a Major Disaster Declaration for the areas affected by the fires raging across Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties.

“While the conditions are improving, the brave men and women who are risking their lives by fighting these fires in Southern California continue to face extremely high temperatures and unpredictable Santa Ana winds,” said Congressman Miller. “The wildfires have already consumed tens of thousands of acres, caused numerous injuries, destroyed hundreds of homes, and caused thousands to evacuate.”

Yesterday, Governor Schwarzenegger sent a letter to President Bush requesting a major disaster declaration for the State of California as a result of extremely high winds and wildfires. A Major Disaster Declaration under the Stafford Act authorizes the President to issue major disaster or emergency declarations before or after catastrophes occur. Emergency declarations trigger aid that protects property, public health, and safety and also constitutes broader authority for federal agencies to provide supplemental assistance to help state and local governments, families, and individuals recover from the incident.

“It is essential that the federal government provide the necessary resources needed not only to protect the lives and homes of Southern Californians, but also to help our communities recover and rebuild when these fires are extinguished,” added Congressman Miller. “These resources are greatly needed and will be immediately put to good use.”

Those that signed the letter to the President include Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, as well as Reps. Joe Baca, Howard Berman, Brian Bilbray, Mary Bono Mack, Ken Calvert, John Campbell, Lois Capps, Susan Davis, John Doolittle, David Dreier, Sam Farr, Bob Filner, Elton Gallegly, Jane Harman, Wally Herger, Barbara Lee, Jerry Lewis, Zoe Lofgren, Doris Matsui, Buck McKeon, Gary Miller, George Miller, Grace Napolitano, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Dana Rohrabacher, Ed Royce, Linda Sanchez, Loretta Sanchez, Adam Schiff, Brad Sherman, Jackie Speier, Hilda Solis, Ellen Tauscher, Mike Thompson, Diane Watson, Henry Waxman, and Lynn Woolsey.