



PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

June 24, 2026

U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security/FEMA
Hon. Markwayne Mullin, Secretary of Homeland Security
Robert J. Fenton, Acting FEMA Administrator
Tammy Littrell, FEMA Deputy Regional Director, Region 9

via dhsexecsec@hq.dhs.gov
FEMA-administrator@fema.dhs.gov
tammy.littrell@fema.dhs.gov

U.S. Senate
Hon. Adam Schiff, U.S. Senator for California
Hon. Alex Padilla, U.S. Senator for California

via patricia_horton@sen.gov
via lauren.gallant@sen.gov

U.S. House of Representatives
Hon. Brad Sherman, Representative, 32nd District
Hon. Judy Chu, Representative, 28th District

via john.alford@mail.house.gov
via madeline.hanley@mail.house.gov

Re: Request for Extension and Expansion of FEMA Housing and Rental Assistance for Los Angeles Wildfire Survivors

Dear Secretary Mullin, Acting Administrator Fenton, Deputy Regional Director Littrell, Senator Schiff, Senator Padilla, Representative Sherman and Representative Chu:

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) has since 1973 been the voice of Pacific Palisades, the community devastated by the Palisades Fire on January 7, 2025. Acting pursuant to PPCC's bylaws, and on the recommendation of the Palisades Community Recovery Coordination Council (CCRC), the PPCC Executive Committee writes on behalf of the community to respectfully request that FEMA extend and expand housing and rental assistance for disaster survivors of the January 2025 Los Angeles Fires in Pacific Palisades, Altadena and surrounding communities.

It has now been eighteen months since the disaster, yet recovery remains at an early stage, with most households still unable to safely or financially return to permanent housing. The current FEMA June 30, 2026, termination date risks ending assistance before its intended purpose is fulfilled.

Request for Action

Given conditions described above and below, we respectfully request that FEMA:

- Extend FEMA housing and rental assistance for a minimum of 12 to 24 months, with provisions for further extension based on demonstrated recovery progress and conditions at that time.
- Revise rental assistance calculations to reflect localized rental markets, distinguishing between distinct submarkets such as Pacific Palisades, Altadena, and other impacted areas within Los Angeles County.
- Expand eligibility criteria, including reassessment of income caps, to reflect the cumulative financial burdens of disaster recovery, including mortgages, property taxes, insurance, HOA fees and rent.
- Maintain flexibility for continued assistance where recovery conditions remain unresolved, ensuring that households are not forced out of support due to timing constraints rather than recovery readiness.

Major Recovery Barriers Persist

Many insurance claims remain unresolved more than 18 months after the fires, while some carriers have terminated Alternative Living Expense (ALE) benefits before homes are safely habitable or rebuilding plans are finalized. At the same time, wildland-urban interface fire conditions created complex contamination concerns in many standing homes that were not fully understood or evaluated in the early stages of the disaster response. The resulting testing, remediation, and environmental clearance requirements have added months to reoccupation timelines.

Recovery has also been slowed by permitting delays, unresolved HOA governance and rebuilding decisions affecting condominium and townhome owners, labor and contractor shortages, infrastructure constraints, and escalating construction costs. Together, these factors have substantially delayed both rebuilding and reoccupation across the affected communities.

Recovery Remains in Early-Stage Conditions

According to the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), *Los Angeles Wildfires: Economic Update #3 (June 2026)*, recovery across the impacted region remains in an **early-stage recovery** phase when measured by functional restoration of communities, including reoccupation, reopening of businesses, and restoration of core services such as schools and healthcare.

LAEDC findings underscore that:

- Fewer than 1% of destroyed structures have completed reconstruction.
- The vast majority of households remain in insurance resolution, permitting, HOA governance, or construction planning stages rather than active rebuilding.
- Community-level reoccupation remains limited, indicating that functional recovery has not yet occurred at scale.
- Recovery timelines remain extended across all major housing indicators despite the passage of eighteen months.

FEMA Assistance Has Not Yet Fulfilled Its Intended Purpose

FEMA housing assistance is intended to bridge the gap between disaster impact and the restoration of safe, permanent housing. For many wildfire survivors, that gap remains open due to circumstances beyond their control, including unresolved insurance claims, environmental testing and remediation requirements, permitting delays, HOA governance processes, and construction constraints. Ending assistance on a fixed calendar date would terminate support before many households are able to safely reoccupy, rebuild, or secure permanent housing, effectively ending assistance before its intended purpose has been fulfilled.

Rental Assistance Must Reflect Local Housing Markets

We respectfully request that FEMA revise its rental assistance methodology to reflect actual local rental markets rather than broad Los Angeles County-wide Fair Market Rent (FMR) averages. The impacted communities include distinct housing submarkets—particularly Pacific Palisades, Altadena and surrounding areas—that differ materially in rental costs and availability from the countywide average.

A uniform countywide standard does not reflect the real cost of securing comparable housing near affected communities. This creates a structural gap between assistance levels and market rents, forcing many households to relocate farther away and fragmenting community networks during recovery.

Expanded Eligibility and Financial Hardship

We also request expansion of eligibility criteria, including reassessment of income caps that were not designed to

account for prolonged, multi-layered disaster displacement conditions. Many households across a broad income spectrum are now experiencing sustained financial strain due to overlapping recovery costs, including:

- Ongoing mortgage payments on damaged or uninhabitable homes
- Property taxes
- Insurance premiums on both damaged and temporary housing
- HOA fees for condominium and townhome owners
- Market-rate rent for temporary housing

These combined obligations have created long-duration financial pressure that extends well beyond typical disaster recovery assumptions.

Health, Trauma, and Extended Displacement Impacts

In addition to financial hardship, many survivors continue to experience significant emotional and psychological impacts associated with prolonged displacement, uncertainty, and loss of community stability. Extended separation from schools, healthcare providers, and social support networks, combined with unresolved housing timelines, has contributed to sustained trauma and mental health strain across affected populations.

Risk of Premature Exit from Recovery

Absent extension, many households will be forced into permanent relocation decisions driven by financial exhaustion rather than recovery completion. This would result in avoidable displacement from impacted communities, loss of community continuity, and increased long-term public recovery costs.

Program Alignment and Efficiency

Aligning assistance timelines with observed recovery conditions would improve program effectiveness, reduce administrative disruption caused by abrupt terminations and reinstatements, and ensure that already-allocated federal resources are used as intended when households reach actual readiness to transition out of temporary housing.

FEMA's housing assistance programs are most effective when they reflect the actual conditions on the ground. In this case, recovery remains incomplete by all key functional measures identified by LAEDC, and many households are still far from the point of safe, financially viable reoccupation or rebuilding. Extending and refining these programs will ensure that federal assistance remains aligned with the realities facing survivors.

The question before FEMA is not whether recovery is ongoing, but whether assistance ends before recovery is functionally complete for a majority of displaced households.

We appreciate FEMA's continued commitment to disaster recovery and respectfully urge timely action to ensure that assistance reflects both the pace and complexity of recovery in Pacific Palisades, Altadena and surrounding communities

Sincerely,

The PPCC Executive Committee:

President Sue Kohl, Vice-President Quentin Fleming, Treasurer Jenny Li, Secretary Beth Holden-Garland, Chair Emeritus Maryam Zar, Elected Representative (At Large) Christina Spitz, Organizational Representative (PRIDE) John Padden

Concurrence: PPCC Officers-elect:

President Allison Holdorff Polhill, Vice-President Reza Akef, Treasurer Daphne Gronich, Secretary Caroline Nick

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Pacific Palisades Community Council
Federal Officials – Homeland Security, FEMA and Congress
June 24, 2026

cc:

State of California
Hon. Gavin Newsom, Governor of California
via Victor Reyes-Morelos, Deputy Regional Director
Cynthia Stein, Sr. Counselor to the Governor

victor.reyes-morelos@gov.ca.gov
cynthia.stein@gov.ca.gov

County of Los Angeles
Hon. Lindsey Horvath, Supervisor, SD 3
Hon. Kathryn Barger, Supervisor, SD 6

thirddistrict@bos.lacounty.gov
kathryn@bos.lacounty.gov

City of Los Angeles
Hon. Karen Bass, Mayor of Los Angeles
Hon. Traci Park, Councilwoman, CD 11

karen.bass@lacity.org
traci.park@lacity.org

FEMA (general)

FEMA-r9newsdesk@fema.dhs.gov
FEMA-r9-privatesector@fema.dhs.gov
FEMA-contactus@fema.dhs.gov