



Special Legislative Update ■ May 13, 2020

Governor Newsom Announces Proposed Budget Investment in Emergency Preparedness

As a preview to tomorrow's May Revision release, Governor Gavin Newsom used his noon press conference to highlight proposed budget investments in the state's emergency preparedness infrastructure. Standing in front of a CALFIRE truck at the Cameron Park Community Services District in El Dorado County, the Governor stressed that mobilizing California's resources will not stop in the midst of COVID-19. Last year's budget included some significant investments in fuel management projects that are near completion and the Governor will propose additional appropriations for the upcoming budget. The May Revision will include \$213 million in emergency preparedness funding, including \$17.3 million for an earthquake early warning system; \$50 million to assist local agencies in managing public safety power shutoffs (PSPS), particularly associated with assuring elections integrity; a new wildfire safety team at the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC); and additional investments for staff of CalOES and CALFIRE. CALFIRE Chief Thom Porter urged Californians to continue to prepare for wildfire season by creating defensible space and hardening homes; the chief touted the collaborative partnership with federal and local governments in preparing for this year's fire season.

Governor Newsom also highlighted the "spirit of collaboration" between the California Department of Public Health and counties working through the attestation process to move more rapidly through the state's reopening roadmap. The updated listing of counties that have had their attestations posted by the Department of Public Health is available [online](#).

May 12 Special Election Results

An all-mail special election was held yesterday to fill one congressional and one Assembly seat due to recent resignations. When Congresswoman Katie Hill resigned from her 25th Congressional District seat last year, it left a vacancy in the district that encompasses portions of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. In yesterday's election, Mike Garcia (R) – a former Navy officer and fighter pilot who now works as a defense industry executive – defeated his challenger, Assembly Member Christy Smith (D), by a 12-percent margin. Christy Smith will remain in her Assembly seat for the remainder of her term, but will continue to run against Garcia in the November general election for the new congressional term.

In the other special election of the day, Assembly Member Melissa Melendez (R) handily defeated Democratic challenger Elizabeth Romero (D) in Senate District 28, a seat fully contained in Riverside

County. Senator-elect Melendez will fill the remainder of former-Senator Jeff Stone's term; Senator Stone left his seat in November 2019 when he accepted a position with the Trump Administration. Yesterday's results will trigger another special election to fill in behind Assembly Member Melendez's soon-to-be-vacant seat in Assembly District 67.

COVID-19 Lawsuit Tracker

CalMatters has [assembled](#) the various lawsuits that have been filed against the Governor in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to a summary of each case, links are provided to the filings for each lawsuit.

LAO Posts Overview of COVID-19 Research Funding

In three separate pieces of federal legislation enacted since the onset of the pandemic, substantial appropriations were made to support of funding for research and development (R&D). In this [post](#), the Legislative Analyst's office offers background information on R&D funding nationally and in our state, outlines the relevant provisions in the three federal relief measures legislation, and highlights policy considerations for the Legislature.