Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 24, 2026

The Honorable Cameron Hamilton
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Hamilton,

We write in strong support of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' (CalOES) appeal of FEMA Region 9's September 11, 2026, denial of $6,568,265.60 in additional funding for the Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP) serving survivors of the January 2025 Eaton and Palisades Fires in Los Angeles County. Without immediate action from FEMA, DCMP operations will be forced to terminate prematurely on September 30, 2026, leaving thousands of wildfire survivors without critical rebuilding and recovery support.

As we indicated in our September 10, 2026, letter, which has not received a response, additional federal funding is urgently needed to ensure DCMP can operate through the 24-month timeframe FEMA approved on May 5, 2025. FEMA approved this program because survivors needed sustained case management throughout a long and difficult recovery. Yet FEMA's own funding delays still threaten to force the program to shut down months before the end of that approved period.

On September 11, 2026, FEMA denied the State's request for additional funding, stating the State had not provided sufficient cost justification demonstrating a need for funding beyond the original FEMA-approved award. But FEMA has not even provided the full amount of that original award. Of the approximately $13 million approved by FEMA, only one installment of approximately $3 million has been released to date, while the remaining three installments are still under FEMA's review.

The State's supplemental funding request is not an effort to unnecessarily expand DCMP. Instead, it reflects the documented cost of continuing to provide services through January 8, 2027 – the original timeframe FEMA already approved. However, given that FEMA provided less than half of the amount that the State initially requested, the additional funding is needed to ensure the program can continue through the previously approved 2-year time frame. FEMA should not allow its own delays in releasing approved funding to prematurely terminate a program it determined was necessary for this recovery.

The continued need for DCMP is clear. According to DCMP providers, more than 3,000 survivors have already been served by the program, including 1,288 active cases and 84 survivors on an immediate waitlist. Of the active caseload, 1,023 cases are categorized at the highest complexity levels. And a broader provider database indicates that 7,000 additional survivors are awaiting assignment to a case manager. These numbers demonstrate that the need for case management has not diminished. Thousands of survivors remain in the middle of their recovery and thousands more are still waiting for assistance.

That need could become even more acute in the coming weeks. FEMA Rental Assistance for Los Angeles wildfire survivors is currently scheduled to expire on October 9, just days after DCMP could reportedly be terminated. As of September 17, 801 households were receiving rental assistance, including 623 renter households, with another 329 applications pending. Allowing DCMP to terminate in tandem with this separate housing assistance cliff, risks leaving survivors without trained case managers precisely when many may need additional help navigating housing challenges and other unmet recovery needs.

We therefore urge FEMA to immediately grant the State's appeal and approve the additional $6,568,265.60 necessary to sustain DCMP through its approved period. We further urge FEMA to immediately release the remaining installments of the existing DCMP award and take all available administrative steps necessary to ensure there is no interruption in DCMP services while the State's appeal and outstanding funding installments are under review.

Given the impending September 30, 2026, termination of this program, we request responses to the following questions no later than September 28, 2026:

1. FEMA stated in its denial that the State did not demonstrate the need for additional funding beyond the program's initial scope and award. What specific additional documentation or cost justification does FEMA require to approve the State's supplemental funding request?
2. How did FEMA determine that the State had not demonstrated a need for additional funding when less than one-quarter of the approximately $13 million FEMA already approved has actually been released?
3. What is the expected timeframe for FEMA to complete its review and release the second, third, and fourth installments of the existing DCMP award?
4. In its denial of the supplemental funding request, FEMA stated that these installments were delayed in part because non-disaster program grants were prioritized due to deadlines that could have "placed funding at risk." Given that DCMP itself is now at risk of prematurely terminating because of a lack of funding, what steps is FEMA taking to expedite review and release of these outstanding funds?
5. What immediate steps will FEMA take to ensure there is no interruption in DCMP services on September 30 while the State's appeal and the remaining installments of the existing award are under review?

More than 20 months after the Eaton and Palisades Fires devastated our communities, thousands of survivors remain in the midst of rebuilding their homes and their lives. FEMA approved DCMP to support survivors through this lengthy recovery. It would be unacceptable for that program to collapse prematurely not because the need has disappeared, but because FEMA has failed to release already-approved funding and denied the additional resources necessary to keep it operating.

We urge FEMA to act immediately to grant the State's appeal, release the outstanding funds, and ensure there is no interruption in services for the thousands of survivors who depend on DCMP.

Sincerely,

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

Alex Padilla
United States Senator

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

CC: Robert J. Fenton, Jr., Region 9 Administrator, FEMA