

Calif. lawmakers push back on White House with new wildfire request

By Emily Cadei, McClatchy

California's House members are joining across party lines to call for \$4.4 billion for wildfire recovery from Congress, a unified statement that boosts the state's chances of securing much-needed funds to help rebuild after this fall's devastating fires.

The request is also a rebuke of the White House, which sent a \$44 billion disaster aid request to Congress last month that made little mention of the state's fire victims. The Trump administration later clarified that its requests for money for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Small Business Administration would all apply to California's fire recovery, as well as Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

Even so, the sums the White House outlined on Nov. 17 were far less than what states affected by these disasters said they need to rebuild. California Democratic Reps. Mike Thompson and Jared Huffman called the \$44 billion request "anemic" even if applied just to hurricane recovery, and not nearly enough if wildfire needs were also included in the mix.

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