

May 5, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Californians and constituents concerned about the risks climate change presents to our state's communities and critical infrastructure, we strongly urge your Administration to fund the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) 2021 program at the maximum six percent allocation of funds distributed from the Disaster Relief Fund in 2020.

There is an incredible need for this program and support to fund community resilience projects. In total, there were 980 applications for the BRIC program last year, its inaugural year, from all 50 states, U.S. territories, and 62 tribes, which identified nearly \$3.6 billion in needed support. California submitted projects that asked for more than \$200 million in federal cost share.

In California alone, the need for innovative and collaborative resilience programs has never been clearer. Just in the last twelve months, our state experienced wildfires that burned across four percent of the state, extreme heat waves and rolling brownouts that affected millions, and stronger storms that flooded roadways and knocked out power lines. We also know that the past is no longer indicative of the future, and based on the best available climate models, these extreme weather events are projected to increase in frequency and severity in the coming years.

Further, investing in disaster resilience now saves us money and lives in the future. The National Institute of Building Sciences concluded that disaster resilience investments made today can save from \$3 to \$11 per dollar invested, depending on the circumstances and type of hazard. Given this, it is imperative for communities to plan, design, and build now in order to have safe and reliable critical infrastructure, resilient communities and ecosystems in the future.

While California is experiencing and planning for these climate hazards, we cannot mitigate or adapt to the reality of climate change alone. Addressing the myriad of challenges before us, including our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, make collaborative efforts like the FEMA BRIC program so critical to local, regional and tribal governments. And the need across our nation couldn't be clearer, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable communities who are the most impacted and the least prepared for climate change.

In creating the BRIC program, Congress provided discretion to the President on the total allocation amount up to six percent. Fully funding at that level would mean up to \$3.7 billion in funding would be available to cover the federal cost share for these much-needed resilience grants – investment that would increase our long-term climate resilience, support disadvantaged

and vulnerable communities, and create economic stimulus and infrastructure investment. By acting to fully fund BRIC, you will be taking an important first step towards increasing infrastructure resilience and advancing one of the investment priorities outlined in your *American Jobs Plan*.

Thank you for your attention and leadership to address the climate crisis.

Sincerely,

Bay Area Business Roundtable
Bay Area Climate Adaptation Network (BayCan)
Bay Area Council
Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC)
California African American Chamber of Commerce
California Community Builders
California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce
Central Coast Energy Services
Central Valley Opportunity Center
Climate Resolve
Community Education Partnerships
Community Resource Project
East Oakland Community Development Center
El Concilio of San Mateo County
Farallon Strategies
Hispanics in Energy
Institute for Local Government
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Local 1245
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
Latino Journal
Lend a Hand Foundation
Local Government Commission
Los Angeles Latino Chamber of Commerce
Oakland Latino Chamber of Commerce
PG&E Corporation
Redwood Community Action Agency
San Francisco Peninsula Energy Services
San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority (SFCJPA)
Silicon Valley Leadership Group
SPUR
The Trust for Public Land

Cc: The Honorable Shalanda Young, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget
Members of the California Congressional Delegation