

**Sponsors: Northern California Power Agency; California Municipal Utilities Association; Southern California Public Power Authority; Florida Municipal Electric Association; Tennessee Municipal Electric Power Association**

**In Support of Improved Efforts to Prevent and Respond to Natural Disasters**

1 Each year, between 100 and 200 federal natural disasters are declared. Federal statistics show that the  
2 frequency and severity of natural disasters are increasing. According to the National Oceanic and  
3 Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 2017 saw record-breaking losses from natural disasters, totaling  
4 \$306 billion worth of damages. Nearly every area of the country has been touched by hurricanes,  
5 flooding, wildfires, and ice storms. These events threaten loss of life and property, both from direct  
6 impact and the often extended periods before electric service can be restored, disaster assistance can be  
7 provided, and facilities and personal property can be rebuilt.

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9 As community-owned resources, public power utilities are committed to improving the resiliency of their  
10 systems and responding expeditiously to disasters, including by restoring service as quickly and  
11 efficiently as possible. Public power utilities also help each other—through the provision of mutual aid  
12 by public power utilities providing crew and equipment to repair both neighboring and distant utilities.

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14 Recent experience underscores the value of mutual aid and federal disaster assistance, but also highlights  
15 how improvements should be made, including:

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- 17 • An expansion of voluntary participation in, and coordination of, mutual aid efforts;
- 18 • Improvement in the administration and determination of Federal Emergency Management  
19 Agency grants to reimburse utilities, in part by allowing state and local government procurement  
20 policies to meet federal procurement requirements under the public assistance grant program.  
21 This, in turn, will expedite payments to those utilities that have provided mutual aid;
- 22 • A reform of federal disaster assistance programs to facilitate greater focus on disaster prevention,  
23 staging, system resiliency, program efficiency, and improved oversight; and
- 24 • A reform of hazard mitigation programs to avoid penalizing hazard mitigation investments prior  
25 to an event.

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27 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the American Public Power Association (APPA)  
28 commends its members for executing and participating in mutual aid agreements and encourages greater  
29 member participation in mutual aid; and  
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31 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA commits to enhancing and expanding the mutual aid  
32 program among its members, including improved promotion and coordination of member efforts; and

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34 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That APPA calls on Congress to reform federal disaster assistance  
35 programs to improve the administration and determination of Federal Emergency Management Agency  
36 grants to: better enable utilities to use federal funds for disaster prevention and system resiliency  
37 investments; expedite federal payments to utilities for both direct disaster responses and mutual aid  
38 payments; and provide adequate federal funding for disaster response.