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## **Assemblymember Rodriguez Introduces Legislation to Ensure the Seismic Retrofitting Program for Soft Story Multifamily Housing is Funded**

**(Sacramento, CA)** –Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona) has introduced AB 1505, which would ensure the Seismic Retrofitting Program for Soft Story Multifamily Housing is funded in this year’s State Budget. Last year, Assemblymember Rodriguez successfully allocated \$250 million in the 2023-24 General Fund of the State Budget to establish and implement this program. As we are facing a deficit this year, this funding has been proposed to be cut, and AB 1505 would help to prevent that from happening.

“The 7.8 magnitude earthquake that caused complete devastation in Turkey and Syria is a warning to California as to what would happen if an earthquake of a similar scale struck the State. Those living in soft-story buildings are in great danger of being killed or displaced in an earthquake, and we must invest in protecting these vulnerable populations by improving our infrastructure,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) modeling for major earthquake scenarios in the Bay Area and Southern California, violent shaking in densely populated areas could result in over 50,000 displaced households and more than 30,000 persons requiring short-term shelter.

The Structural Engineers Association of California and California Seismic Safety Commission estimate there are as many as 100,000 soft-story apartment buildings, often located in small, disadvantaged communities that do not have the resources to correct these conditions. Additionally, the U.S. Resiliency Council estimates as many as 2.5 million Californians may live in older, soft-story, multifamily housing at risk of collapse in earthquakes due to weak construction.

Studies show that protecting existing affordable housing costs \$5-10k per unit. In stark contrast, producing new affordable housing costs between \$575-800k. In addition to the cost-effective benefit of this program, the timeline of retrofitting these buildings is quick, displacing families for a short time, if at all. The Seismic Retrofitting Program for Soft Story Multifamily Housing would enable California to invest in protecting our infrastructure before a significant catastrophe strikes.

“When I reflect on my experience responding to the 1994 Northridge earthquake, I see complete destruction and deaths that could have been prevented. In that earthquake, hundreds of people died due to the collapse of soft story multifamily housing. We must learn from past devastation and protect our infrastructure and our residents. AB 1505 enables us to do so,” **added Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

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*Assemblymember Rodriguez ([Twitter](#)) represents the 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District which includes the cities of Chino, Montclair, Ontario, Pomona, and Upland. He is Chair of the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management.*