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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Legislation Establishing the California Individual Assistance Act Passes the State Assembly**

**(Sacramento, CA)** – Today, Assembly Bill (AB) 513, authored by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona), passed the Assembly Floor with unanimous support. This bill would establish the California Individual Assistance Act within Cal OES. The program would provide timely and direct assistance to families and individuals who would not be eligible for or may not warrant federal disaster assistance.

“California is a disaster-prone state, and as Chair of the Emergency Management Committee, I am committed to ensuring we are prepared for all types of disasters and can recover when catastrophe does strike. AB 513 will unlock a new tool to aid our communities when they are facing devastation and do not meet the criteria for federal assistance,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

AB 513 would allow funds in the California Disaster Assistance Act to be used to provide financial assistance to local governments, community-based organizations, and individuals to repair disaster-related damages not covered by insurance or other assistance programs, losses in income not covered by insurance or other resources, and costs accrued by local agencies and community-based organizations from disaster response.

Additionally, AB 513 would recognize the capabilities of local governments and community-based organizations to deliver culturally competent emergency response and recovery services to displaced residents to ensure no family or individual is overlooked or forgotten in the aftermath of a disaster.

Unfortunately, FEMA’s Individual Assistance Program prioritizes aid for major catastrophes and often determines local disasters in states to be too minor for federal assistance. However, FEMA does recommend that states establish an individual assistance program, and several other states offer or have offered individual assistance following a disaster. California must follow other states’ lead and FEMA’s advice to establish the California Individual Assistance Program.

“While we cannot predict disasters, we can ensure that we have the ability to respond to and recover from them. Seeing the aftermath of recent disasters and our communities’ difficulty recovering solidified the crucial need to establish an individual assistance program in California so that communities no longer struggle to recover from a major disaster,” **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.*