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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Legislation to Codify the Flood Operations Center within DWR Advances to the Senate

(Sacramento, CA) – Yesterday, Assembly Bill (AB) 277, authored by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona), passed the Assembly Floor with unanimous support. This legislation would codify the Flood Operations Center within the Department of Water Resources. AB 277 would also direct Cal OES and the Flood Operations Center to identify technological advances for forecasting the impacts of Atmospheric Rivers and to identify gaps in California’s flood response.

“As Chair of the Emergency Management Committee, I always stress the importance of being prepared for all potential disasters as California is a disaster-prone state, and we cannot predict what will impact our state next. AB 277 will ultimately result in better forecasting capabilities, enabling Californians to better prepare for extreme weather events,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

California has experienced destructive flood events throughout its history. Before January 2023, the last major flooding event was the 1997 New Year’s Day floods, resulting in the evacuation of 120,000 people and 23,000 flooded homes and businesses. More recently, local flood disasters include the Oroville Spillway flood of 2017 and the Russian River floods of 2019. Before this year’s atmospheric rivers and flooding incidents, every California county has declared a federal disaster area due to flooding at least once during the last 30 years.

Since disasters disproportionately impact vulnerable individuals and communities, AB 277 will seek to mitigate risks posed by extreme atmospheric river incidents and increase communities’ resiliency.

“California would greatly benefit from more accurate forecasting to determine the extent to which extreme weather events, such as atmospheric rivers and extended periods of extreme heat, would significantly damage or disrupt lifeline infrastructure systems. AB 277 would ensure local emergency managers have the information necessary to keep people safe and informed during severe winter storms,” **added Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

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