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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Extreme Weather Forecasting Legislation Passes Critical First Senate Policy Committee

(Sacramento, CA) – Today, Assembly Bill (AB) 277, authored by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D – Pomona), unanimously passed the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water. 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 Atmospheric Rivers’ impacts and identify gaps in California’s flood response.

“I always say that California is a disaster-prone state, and we must be prepared for all types of disasters, as well as the possibility of being faced with two simultaneous catastrophic disasters. The atmospheric rivers that impacted the State earlier this year solidified this need for further preparation, and AB 277 will better position California to prepare for these extreme weather incidents,” **stated Assemblymember Rodriguez.**

More specifically, AB 277 would establish that the purpose of the Flood Operations Center is to function as a focal point for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating flood and water-related information. This bill would also require the Flood Operations Center and Cal OES, with the cooperating agencies, to develop and submit a report to the Legislature outlining necessary technological advancements for agile forecasting. The report would also identify gaps in data, underserved regions, and strategies for improving communication and emergency response.

Earlier this year, the Assembly Committees on Emergency Management, Water, Parks & Wildlife, and Utilities and Energy convened a [Joint Oversight Hearing](#) to evaluate California’s preparedness for extreme atmospheric river incidents.

The committees heard from the leading climate scientists and researchers on the type of incidents our emergency managers should be prepared for, how the State could improve local forecast models to more accurately predict local impacts, and the need to quickly warn residents of any danger from flooding or extended power outages. AB 277 will enable us to identify ways to improve our forecasting capabilities and provide state and local emergency management with the necessary information to prepare for these extreme atmospheric river incidents.

“As Chair of the Committee on Emergency Management, I am committed to evaluating and working to improve our emergency operation systems. AB 277 is an example of my committee hearing from experts to inform legislation to improve our emergency operations,” **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.