

WILDFIRE VICTIMS FIRST FRAMEWORK



Fix the system. Victims First.

THE PROBLEM

California is facing an affordability and wildfire crisis — and the system built to protect victims is failing them. Climate change, wildland-urban interface development, and outdated land use policies have made wildfires more frequent and more devastating. But the greater crisis is what happens after the fire. California's recovery system is slow, uneven, and in many cases predatory. Billboard attorneys take up to 40% of settlements. Hedge funds buy up victim claims to turn a profit. Victims who have lost their homes, their belongings, and their communities — are last in line.

"Wildfire survivors often wait several years for settlement payments, with many cases taking up to five years to resolve. Additionally, attorney contingency fee arrangements, which commonly range from one-third to 40% of total recovery in California wildfire cases, substantially reduce the net compensation available to rebuild their homes and their lives."

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Making matters worse, the California FAIR Plan — the state's insurer of last resort — provides only basic coverage, charges higher premiums, and was never designed to carry the load it now bears. As private insurers exit the state, more Californians are pushed onto the FAIR Plan every year, threatening its solvency. **Californians deserve better.**

THE SOLUTION

A THREE-PART PLAN TO PUT VICTIMS FIRST

The Wildfire Victims First Framework is a comprehensive reform built around one core principle: victims come first.

01

PREVENT WILDFIRES BEFORE THEY START

- Require utility companies to implement rigorous wildfire mitigation protocols and hold them accountable when they fail
- Update laws and regulations around wildfire prevention to better protect our communities
- Strengthen coordination between local governments and first responders to improve prevention and response
- Incentivize homeowners to upgrade to fire-resistant roofing, vents, windows, and materials

02

ENSURE AFFORDABLE, COMPREHENSIVE INSURANCE

- Replace the inadequate FAIR Plan with comprehensive wildfire coverage
- Open the California market to insurers currently priced out by wildfire risk
- Administer wildfire coverage through a non-profit structure to keep premiums low

03

COMPENSATE VICTIMS: FAST, FAIR, AND FIRST

- Establish a streamlined claims process with payment within 60 days
- Guarantee victims are first in line — not last
- Cap trial attorney payouts so legal fees don't consume settlements
- Crack down on hedge funds purchasing wildfire claims for profit
- Eliminate costly, years-long litigation as the primary path to recovery

"Failure to act, or a conscious decision not to act, on risk reduction and on opportunities to enhance the functionality of our insurance markets and electric utilities will have large near-term and severe long-term adverse consequences for Californians."

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