

**PLACER COUNTY  
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** David Boesch, County Executive Officer  
by Rui Cunha, Assistant Director, Emergency Services

**DATE:** September 11, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Letter from Board of Supervisors supporting SAFER Grant application.

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**ACTION REQUESTED**

Authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to sign a letter requested by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which supports the application by Placer County Fire for a grant under the *Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)* grant program (15 USCS 2229a).

**BACKGROUND**

As the Board is aware, fiscal issues continue to plague North Auburn/Ophir Fire (NAOF) within the Placer County Fire system. Declining property tax revenues led to placing a vote for a special assessment on the last election ballot in order to ensure maintaining existing service levels. However, the item was defeated, and therefore the decision was made to close Station 182 in Ophir in order to meet existing NAOF budget requirements. Closure of any station impacts service levels and has the additional potential impact of causing steep increases in insurance rates to individuals within the fire service area.

In an effort to delay an impact of this magnitude, Placer County Fire submitted an application to FEMA for a SAFER grant which provides fire staffing for two full years and has no match requirement. The total grant award would be approximately \$1.2 million over two years.

In a recent correspondence to Placer County, the SAFER grant administrator's office has indicated that the Placer County application requires an accompanying letter from the Board of Supervisors in order to meet requirements for further consideration. The attached letter provides a commitment by Placer County to comply with: DHS Standard Administrative Terms and Conditions; Federal Financial Requirements; Programmatic Reporting Requirements and guarantee no layoffs within the Placer County Fire system during the period of the grant. Placer County complies routinely with all Federal administrative terms and conditions, financial and programmatic requirements through the various Federal grants that are applied for annually. Based on studies completed in 2011, staff has determined that the Board can make the "no layoffs" assurance based on projected levels of service and revenues throughout the Placer County Fire system.

As presented to the Board in December 2011, revenues in the Dry Creek Fire and Emergency Medical Services Zone of Benefit are not meeting the full cost of services and make payments against the zone's long term debt. Staff indicated that this condition would have to be confirmed and a course of action formulated in the FY 14/15 timeframe for likely implementation in FY 15/16. This is well past the end date of the SAFER grant for NAOF.

It is possible that conditions could occur that are outside the control of the Board of Supervisors. In this case, the SAFER grant guidelines offer grant recipients the opportunity to request a waiver of assurances due to conditions beyond our control. FEMA's approval of a waiver would eliminate Placer County's liability associated with the grant.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no direct fiscal impact as a result of this action. It is staff's assessment that the risk of any potential future fiscal impact is very low and is largely mitigated through a FEMA waiver process.

**Attachment**

Letter to the FEMA SAFER grant program  
Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program Guidance -  
(Available for review at the Clerk of the Board's Office)

# County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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District 5



September 11, 2012

Ms. Catherine Patterson  
Chief, Assistance to Firefighters Grants Branch  
DHS/FEMA  
800 K Street, Mailstop 3620  
Washington DC 20472-3620

Re: *Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program*

Dear Ms. Patterson,

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer in the State of California has reviewed the requirements of the *Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program (15 USCS 2229a)*, and has concluded that, should it be awarded a grant under this program, Placer County will comply with all requirements as detailed in the SAFER Grant Program, Program Guidance dated June 2012 and will maintain its system wide fire services staffing levels and incur no firefighter lay-offs for the Placer County Fire system during the grant performance period.

Should you have any further questions or if we can be of any further assistance, please contact the Assistant Director of Emergency Services, Mr. Rui Cunha, at (530) 886-4662 or by email at [rcunha@placer.ca.gov](mailto:rcunha@placer.ca.gov).

Respectfully,

Jennifer Montgomery, Chairwoman  
Supervisor District 5  
Placer County Board of Supervisors

DS:dw

