

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: July 1, 2008  
POSITION: Oppose

BILL NUMBER: AB 2817  
AUTHOR: A. Torrico

**BILL SUMMARY: Disaster Assistance: Fire Warning Assistance Act**

This bill would enact the California Fire Warning Assistance Act of 2008 to authorize the Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the Department of Forestry and Fire protection (CAL-FIRE), during a specified fire warning issued by the National Weather Service, to request a local agency to preposition fire apparatus and personnel to assist in the initial attack of a potential wildfire in a state responsibility area, as defined. It would require the local agency to be reimbursed according to specified criteria, from funds appropriated to OES in the annual Budget Act or other statute. This bill would make various findings and declarations by the Legislature concerning wildfire disasters in California.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

The total fiscal impact of this bill is unknown. Staff of the OES estimates the cost of bringing additional staffing for red flag days for the fire agencies to support to be \$512,000 per day, plus administrative costs of up to \$97,000 per year. There is an average of 271 red flag days in California. If local resources were activated each time a red flag day occurred, the total annual cost of this measure could exceed \$138 million.

The 2008 Budget Bill and companion trailer bills create a new revenue source for OES, CAL-FIRE, and other state entities to address emergency response situations. It is unclear whether this new revenue source, which comes from a surcharge on property insurance premiums, could be used to support the costs of this measure. At this time, there is no specific appropriation in the Budget Bill for the activities required by this measure. Absent an appropriation, we assume these costs would be borne by the General Fund.

**COMMENTS**

The Department of Finance is opposed to this bill because it would result in additional General Fund costs that are not included in the 2008-09 Budget Bill, and would create cost pressure for additional General Fund expenditures at a time when the state can least afford to do so.

Existing law, the California Disaster Assistance Act, authorizes the Director of Emergency Services to allocate funds, as specified, to local agencies for disaster-related expenses.

This bill would enact the California Fire Warning Assistance Act of 2008 to authorize OES and CAL-FIRE during a specified fire warning issued by the National Weather Service, to request a local agency to preposition fire apparatus and personnel to assist in the initial attack of a potential wildfire in a state responsibility area, as defined. It would require the local agency to be reimbursed according to specified criteria, from funds appropriated to the office in the annual Budget Act or other statute. The bill would make various findings and declarations by the Legislature concerning wildfire disasters in the state.

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Analyst/Principal (0212) J. Osborn	Date	Program Budget Manager Todd Jerue	Date
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Department Deputy Director	Date
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Governor's Office:	By:	Date:	Position Approved _____
			Position Disapproved _____

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**BILL ANALYSIS** Form DF-43 (Rev 03/95 Buff)

**BILL ANALYSIS/ENROLLED BILL REPORT--(CONTINUED)**

**AUTHOR**

**AMENDMENT DATE**

A. Torrico

July 1, 2008

AB 2817

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO LA CO RV	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)							Fund Code
		PROP 98	FC	2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011	
				FC	FC	FC	FC		
0690/OES	SO	No	C		\$49 C		\$97 C	\$97	0001
3540/Forest&Fire	SO	No			----- No/Minor Fiscal Impact -----				0001
0690/OES	LA	No			----- See Fiscal Summary -----				0001
0690/OES	LA	No			----- See Fiscal Summary -----				1014
<u>Fund Code</u>	<u>Title</u>								
0001	General Fund								
1014	Emergency Response Account								