



VILMA CUELLAR STALLINGS
Mayor

ISABEL AGUAYO
Vice Mayor

ANNETTE C. DELGADILLO
Councilmember

PEGGY LEMONS
Councilmember

BRENDA OLMOS
Councilmember

March 16, 2023

Freddie Rodriguez, Chair
Emergency Management Committee
California State Assembly
Capitol Office, Room 2188
P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249-0052

RE: SUPPORT FOR AB 1505 TO PRESERVE MATCHING GRANT FUNDING TO PROTECT AFFORDABLE MULTIFAMILY HOUSING FROM EARTHQUAKES

Dear Assemblymember Rodriguez:

The City of Paramount would like to express its strong support for restoring California Seismic Retrofitting Program funding for Soft Story Multifamily Housing to protect thousands of Paramount residents from earthquakes. Authored by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, a bi-partisan vote by the Legislature placed this program in the FY 2022-23 budget via SB 189 with \$250-million in funding approved for FY 2023-24. While the budget was signed by Governor Newsom on June 20, 2022, the FY 2023-24 proposed budget omitted this funding.

This program is intended to provide matching grant funding to assist “mom and pop” owners with buildings accommodating 2 to 20 units to do seismic retrofits to protect California’s supply of Affordable Multifamily Housing from earthquakes. After a difficult time during the Covid-19 pandemic, many of these owners say they simply do not have sufficient funds available to do these retrofits.

AB 1505 can help prevent the type of tragedy California experienced in the Northridge earthquake 29 years ago when 57 people died—16 in one apartment building. Another 9,000 were injured and thousands were displaced from their homes. The earthquake inflicted some \$93-billion in damages—the most costly quake in U.S. history. Your continued support can help to prevent a repeat of such devastation.

California’s exposure to annual loss from earthquakes ranks among the highest in the nation, and an estimated 100,000 soft-story apartment buildings built prior to 1978 are among the most likely to collapse in earthquakes. Although we don’t know exactly when or where earthquakes will strike, we do know that virtually all areas of California face serious risks of earthquake related deaths, injuries, and property damage. These older,

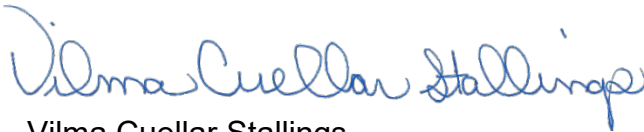
Dedicated to providing fiscally responsible services that maintain a vibrant community.

affordable buildings provide critical housing for as many as 2.5 million Californians, many of whom are elderly, working families, disadvantaged populations, and students. We need to act now to protect our most vulnerable from our greatest natural hazard -- earthquakes.

Currently, the City of Paramount is home to around 52,500 residents and has 46 potential soft-story buildings with approximately 3,040 units total throughout the community. Failure to fund this program could lead to disproportionate death tolls in minority, low-income communities like Paramount where older apartment buildings may face a greater risk of death and injury. We need to correct this problem and believe that AB 1505 represents an excellent approach in preparing Paramount for earthquakes.

It is for these reasons that the City of Paramount requests your favorable consideration in support of AB 1505. Your efforts to make Paramount and the State of California safer and better prepared in the face of natural disasters and other emergencies are greatly appreciated. Thank you for your leadership on earthquake safety in the California State Assembly. We hope that the Assembly Emergency Management Committee and the full Assembly will act soon to restore this vitally needed funding to the State budget. Please feel free to contact City Manager, John Moreno at (562) 220-2225, if you have any questions. On behalf of the City of Paramount, we thank you for your time and consideration.

CITY OF PARAMOUNT



Vilma Cuellar Stallings
Mayor

CC. Honorable State Senator Lena Gonzalez, 33rd District
Honorable Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, 62nd District
Evan Reis, Executive Director, U.S. Resiliency Council
Kristine Guerrero, Regional Public Affairs Manager, League of California Cities
Jorge Morales, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Consultant, California Contract Cities Association