



February 13, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Waiver Under Health and Safety Code Section 19851 for Property Owners Impacted by Wildfires

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of AIA California, an association of over 11,000 design professionals in California; ACEC California, representing over 500 design firms and 25,000 engineers and land surveyors in California; and the California Geotechnical Engineering Association, which represents over 135 geotechnical consulting firms, more than 45 contractors, drillers, and other geoprofessional firms, as well as over 5,000 geoprofessionals in California, we respectfully request that you take appropriate action under Health and Safety Code Section 19851 to provide a waiver of its requirements for property owners impacted by the recent wildfires in Los Angeles. This waiver would allow affected property owners to receive copies of the plans for their homes, which are essential for the recovery and rebuilding process.

Many property owners who have suffered the loss or significant damage of their homes due to these devastating wildfires urgently need access to their original building plans for several critical reasons:

1. **Insurance Claims** – Insurers often require detailed building plans to accurately assess damages, process claims, and determine appropriate compensation. Without access to these documents, property owners may face delays or difficulties in receiving the financial support necessary to begin the rebuilding process.
2. **Planning for Restoration and Rebuilding** – Architectural and engineering professionals rely on these plans to assess structural integrity, develop restoration strategies, and ensure compliance with local building codes. Access to these documents will expedite the reconstruction process.
3. **Permitting and Code Compliance** – Many jurisdictions require existing building plans to evaluate rebuilding applications and issue permits. Without these records, property owners may experience unnecessary delays and additional expenses.

We urge you to exercise your authority to grant this waiver as a compassionate and practical measure that aligns with the state's commitment to supporting communities impacted by natural disasters. By allowing property owners to obtain their plans without unnecessary restrictions, we can help facilitate a smoother, faster, and more cost-effective rebuilding process for those affected by the wildfires.

We appreciate your leadership and attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact Scott Terrell, AIA California Director of Government Relations, at [sterrell@aicalifornia.org](mailto:sterrell@aicalifornia.org) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



**Scott Terrell**  
Director of Government Relations  
American Institute of Architects, California



**Tyler Munzing**  
Director of Government Affairs  
American Council of Engineering Companies, California



**Travis Deane**  
Public Policy Chair  
The California Geotechnical Engineering Association