



November 17, 2025

Dear Board of Supervisors,

The Mendocino County Fire Chiefs Association (MCFCA) requests the inclusion of fire agency related issues into the County's 2026 Legislative Platform. We propose language as follows:

Issue:

Mendocino County partners with the 22 local fire agencies providing all-hazard fire and EMS services and mutual aid. Fire agencies struggle to raise revenues to match the increasing service demands and escalating mandates and standards. Deferred staffing, training, facility and equipment needs are a threat to local and regional response capacity. Recognizing that local fire agencies are critical to our public safety system, Mendocino County advocates for state and federal policies that provide funding, support, technical assistance and resources to local fire agencies.

Actions:

Advocate for and support statewide fire service initiatives led by the Fire District Association of California (FDAC) and CalChiefs that seek to correct decades of state underfunding perpetuating financial instability and difficulties meeting new mandates.

Advocate for and support the expansion of state and federal grant programs to fund the recruitment retention of fire and EMS personnel, as well as dedicated technical assistance and administrative capacity to help small rural agencies access, qualify and manage grants.

Advocate for and support changes to the Fire Code that promote equitable fees and taxation regulations for all property types.

Advocate for and support maximum and timely reimbursement for participation in state and federal incident responses.

Advocate for and support regulations, funding or legislation to ease the maintenance, construction and upgrading of critical fire infrastructure such as fire stations, training facilities and water storage or suppression systems.

Advocate for and support resources and policy flexibility to help rural and volunteer fire agencies meet standards related to minimum staffing, personal protective equipment and apparatus replacement.

Advocate for and support the development of state or federal programs that provide tangible benefits to volunteer firefighter or emergency medical personnel such as health insurance subsidies, retirement incentives or tax rebates to strengthen recruitment and retention of volunteers in rural areas. Advocate for and support investment in fire and EMS training opportunities within Mendocino County to build capacity and meet standards.

Sincerely,

Doug Hutchison

Doug Hutchison - President, Mendocino County Fire Chiefs Association