



FDAC
Fire Districts Association of California

Fighting Fire With Funding: Elected Official Phone Script

Target Audience: Governors Office, Speakers Office, State Legislators (Assemblymembers and State Senators).

Goal: To advocate for immediate action and long-term solutions to the critical funding shortfall impacting California's local fire agencies.

Before You Call:

1. Identify Your Legislators and Find Their Phone Numbers:

- Find your State Assemblymember and State Senator: You can do this by visiting FDAC's legislative monitoring website www.votervoice.net/JointTaskForce/Home or by visiting the California State Assembly website and use their "Find Your Representative" tool.
- For the Governor's Office, you can call (916) 445-2841.

2. Gather Information:

- **Your full name and address:** They will ask for this to verify you are a constituent.
- **The key issue:** Fire service funding shortfall.
- **Key facts (briefly):**
 - Service demands have significantly increased over 50 years, but funding hasn't kept pace.
 - This leads to struggling staffing, equipment, and infrastructure.
 - Local agencies are crucial for mutual aid (over 60% of personnel in recent fires came from local agencies).
 - "Unable to Fill" (UTF) calls for aid are reaching staggering numbers (e.g., 19,435 UTFs in 2020).
- **Your "Ask":** Urge them to prioritize and develop long-term, collaborative solutions for fire service funding.



FDAC
Fire Districts Association of California

The Phone Call Script:

(When the phone is answered, usually by a staff member or intern):

Caller: “Hello, my name is [Your Full Name], and I am a constituent calling from [Your City/Town], California [Your ZIP Code].”

(Pause for them to acknowledge or ask for your address. Provide it if requested.)

Caller: “I am calling today to urge [Senator/Assemblymember/Governor] [Legislator’s Last Name] to immediately address the critical funding crisis facing California’s local fire agencies.”

(If they ask “What is this regarding?” or “Can you tell me more?”):

Caller: “Yes, I understand that our local fire protection districts and fire departments, which cover vast areas and serve over 39 million people, are facing a significant funding shortfall. The demands on their services have grown dramatically over the last 50 years, but their funding mechanisms have not kept pace.”

Caller: “This lack of adequate funding is causing serious problems, including struggles with maintaining staffing, equipment, and essential infrastructure. It directly impacts public safety, potentially leading to longer response times and brownouts.”

Caller: “Furthermore, our local fire agencies are absolutely vital to the statewide mutual aid system. During major incidents like recent fires, over 60% of personnel came from these local agencies. This system is now severely strained, and we’ve seen alarming numbers of ‘Unable to Fill’ requests for mutual aid, with nearly 20,000 in 2020 alone.”

Caller: “My specific ask is that [Senator/Assemblymember/Governor] [Legislator’s Last Name] recognize the urgency of this issue and commit to prioritizing and developing long-term, collaborative solutions to provide secure and sufficient funding for our local fire services. It’s crucial that any solutions involve fire service experts to truly meet modern service demands.”

(Pause for their response. They may thank you, take notes, or ask follow-up questions.)

Caller: “Thank you for taking my call and for relaying my concerns to [Senator/Assemblymember/Governor] [Legislator’s Last Name]. This issue directly impacts the safety and preparedness of our communities, and I truly hope they will take swift action.”

(If they offer to send you more information or thank you):

Caller: “Thank you very much. Have a good day.”



FDAC
Fire Districts Association of California

Key Tips for Your Call:

- **Be Polite and Respectful:** Staff members are often overworked and are your direct line to the legislator. A respectful tone is more effective.
- **Be Concise:** Get to your main points quickly. They handle many calls.
- **Stick to the Script (mostly):** While you can adapt it slightly to sound natural, having your points prepared ensures you cover everything.
- **Don't Get Discouraged:** You will likely speak to staff, not the legislator directly. Your call is still noted and counts towards their constituent feedback.
- **One Issue Per Call:** Focus only on the fire funding shortfall for this call.