



For Immediate Release
September 26, 2013
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Runner Calls on Cal Fire to Halt Billing of Fire Victims

SACRAMENTO – George Runner today urged Cal Fire to stop collecting the state “Fire Prevention Fee” from victims of the Clover Fire in Shasta County and the Rim Fire in Tuolumne and Mariposa counties.

“Despite the heroic efforts of our firefighters, these fires destroyed dozens of homes in my district,” said Runner. “I am appalled the State of California would actually consider sending a tax bill to the very individuals who just lost their homes. Taxes are the last thing fire victims should have to worry about.”

The Board of Equalization is required by law to mail “Fire Prevention Fee” bills on behalf of Cal Fire to nearly 800,000 Californians each year. Although the bills for Mariposa County went out in August, the bills for Shasta and Tuolumne counties do not mail until October 16 and October 28 respectively.

Runner also asked Cal Fire to authorize refunds for fire victims who have already received and paid a bill this year.

Elected in November 2010, George Runner represents more than nine million Californians as a member of the State Board of Equalization. Runner keeps taxpayers informed of the latest fire tax news and information at calfirefee.com.

FULL TEXT OF RUNNER LETTER

September 26, 2013

Dear Mr. Pimlott:

We’re extremely grateful for the many brave firefighters who have battled this year to protect lives and property from the threat of wildfires that have raged across California.

Despite these heroic efforts, the Clover Fire in Shasta County and the Rim Fire in Tuolumne and Mariposa counties destroyed dozens of homes in my district.

Adding insult to injury, the State of California will soon mail tax bills to the very fire victims who just lost their homes.

As you are aware, the Board of Equalization is required by law to mail on behalf of Cal Fire "Fire Prevention Fee" bills each year to nearly 800,000 Californians who own habitable structures in the State Responsibility Area.

These bills are now being mailed in alphabetical order by county. Although the bills for Mariposa County went out in August, the bills for Shasta and Tuolumne counties do not mail until October 16 and October 28 respectively.

Taxes are the last thing fire victims should have to worry about at a time like this. Accordingly, I am requesting that Cal Fire authorize the Board of Equalization to (1) stop sending bills to fire victims who have lost their homes and (2) provide refunds for fire victims who have already received and paid a bill this year.

To facilitate this request, I also ask that Cal Fire provide the Board of Equalization with the names and addresses associated with the habitable structures in the State Responsibility Area that were destroyed by wildfire.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

GEORGE RUNNER
Second District

Cc: Governor Jerry Brown
Secretary John Laird, Natural Resources Agency

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