

**REPORT OF THE
CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

DATE: April 2, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No. 26-0002-S13
Assignment No: 26-03-0203

SUBJECT: Resolution to Support AB 2152 (González)

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution to include in the City's 2025-2026 State Legislative Program, support for AB 2152 (González), which would expedite the process of building essential fire stations in California by offering these projects a California Environmental Quality Act exemption, provided they meet the minimum qualifications.

SUMMARY

Resolution (Park – Rodriguez – Lee), introduced March 4, 2026, observes that despite efforts and funding across various levels of government, localities struggle to construct new fire stations due to rising costs, procedural delays, and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) litigation. The Resolution states that national rates suggest most cities are operating at 1.54 to 1.81 firefighters per 1,000 residents, however, the City of Los Angeles operates at 0.88 firefighters per 1,000 residents. The Resolution notes that despite attempts by the City to bolster fire infrastructure, there have been instances when it has faced frivolous CEQA lawsuits, delaying vital fire station construction, creating a risk to public safety and wasting valuable taxpayer dollars.

Therefore, the Resolution requests that the City include, as part of the 2025-2026 State Legislative Program, support for AB 2152 (González), which would exempt the construction of fire stations from CEQA review, streamlining permitting and reducing associated costs.

BACKGROUND

In January, 2025, the Los Angeles region experienced exceptionally strong Santa Ana winter winds, coupled with the effects of a long dry season, making the region more susceptible to fire. Beginning with a fire near the Pacific Palisades community, additional fires developed in the San Fernando hills near Altadena. Firefighters battled hurricane-force winds carrying sparks and debris as aerial resources were grounded due to dangerous wind conditions. A total of 12 fires broke out in the LA region, stretching resources thin amid severe conditions.

The fires exposed critical gaps in fire station coverage and response infrastructure. The disaster triggered a broad reconsideration of California's regulatory framework as it relates to public safety

construction. Governor Newsom suspending permitting and review requirements under CEQA and the California Coastal Act on an emergency basis, acknowledging that normal regulatory processes were incompatible with urgent public safety needs.

In discussing the negative practical effects of CEQA, Governor Newsom stated that regulatory abuse has been California's biggest problem and that "people using CEQA" are "just holding up projects for years," which "has significantly slowed down housing construction in [the] state." CEQA compliance can be extraordinarily costly. Certain projects require environmental analysis that can cost anywhere from \$200,000 to millions of dollars and can take more than two and a half years to complete.

AB 2152 (González)

The bill, AB 2152, would exempt from the requirements of CEQA any project, activity, or approval necessary for, or incidental to, the planning, design, site acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, or maintenance of a fire station of a public fire agency. The exemption comes with two key conditions: (1) the project must not be located at certain environmentally sensitive sites; and (2) all construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance contracts in excess of \$50,000 for the project must be covered by a project labor agreement, as defined.

The bill would require the lead agency, upon a determination that a project is exempt, to file a notice of exemption with specified content with the Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation. Because the bill would impose additional duties on a lead agency, it would constitute a state-mandated local program.

BILL STATUS

02/18/26	AB 2152 Introduced to State Assembly
03/09/26	Referred to Assembly Committees on Natural Resources and Emergency Management

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED

None

CD Fields

Christopher Fields
Analyst

Attachment: 1. Resolution (Park – Rodriguez – Lee)
2. AB 2152 (González)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, although California continues to invest in fire mitigation and response efforts following the Palisades and Altadena wildfires, the State's emergency response infrastructure is unable to meet the frequency and intensity of disasters; and

WHEREAS, while local agencies are charged with ensuring fire and emergency services can respond within adequate times in their respective jurisdiction, localities struggle to construct new fire stations due to rising costs, procedural delays, and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) litigation; and

WHEREAS, national rates suggest most cities are operating at 1.54 to 1.81 firefighters per 1,000 residents, however, the City of Los Angeles operates at .88 firefighters per 1,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, despite attempts by the City to bolster fire infrastructure, there have been instances when it has faced frivolous CEQA lawsuits, delaying vital fire station construction, creating a risk to public safety and wasting valuable taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, with an intense need for investments into fire response and mitigation, California must remove any barriers that are preventing the rapid and most cost-effective means of constructing fire infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, AB 2152 (González), introduced February 18, 2026 in the State Legislature, would exempt the construction of fire stations from CEQA review, streamlining permitting and reducing associated costs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2025 - 2026 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 2152 (González), which would expedite the process of building essential fire stations in California by offering these projects a CEQA exemption, provided they meet the minimum qualifications.

PRESENTED BY: *Traci Park*
TRACI PARK
Councilwoman, 11th District

Monica Rodriguez
MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilwoman, 7th District

SECONDED BY: *[Signature]*

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ORIGINAL

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2152

Introduced by Assembly Member Mark González

February 18, 2026

An act to add Section 21080.74 to the Public Resources Code, relating to environmental quality.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2152, as introduced, Mark González. California Environmental Quality Act: exemption: fire stations.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires a lead agency, as defined, to prepare, or cause to be prepared, and certify the completion of, an environmental impact report on a project that it proposes to carry out or approve that may have a significant effect on the environment or to adopt a negative declaration if it finds that the project will not have that effect. CEQA also requires a lead agency to prepare a mitigated negative declaration for a project that may have a significant effect on the environment if revisions in the project would avoid or mitigate that effect and there is no substantial evidence that the project, as revised, would have a significant effect on the environment.

This bill would exempt from the requirements of CEQA a project, activity, or approval necessary for, or incidental to, the planning, design, site acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, or maintenance of a fire station of a public fire agency if the project is not located at certain sites and all construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance contracts in excess of \$50,000 for the project are covered by a project labor agreement, as defined. The bill would require the lead agency, upon a determination that a project, activity, or approval is exempt from CEQA pursuant to

these provisions, to file a notice of exemption with specified content with the Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, as provided. Because the bill would impose additional duties on a lead agency in regards to the exemption, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 21080.74 is added to the Public Resources
2 Code, to read:
3 21080.74. (a) This division does not apply to a project, activity,
4 or approval necessary for, or incidental to, the planning, design,
5 site acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, or maintenance of a
6 fire station of a public fire agency if the project is not located in
7 any of the following sites:
8 (1) Prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or unique
9 farmland as designated by the Department of Conservation.
10 (2) Wetlands, as defined in Section 328.3 of Title 33 of the Code
11 of Federal Regulations.
12 (3) A hazardous waste site that is included on any list compiled
13 pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
14 (4) A floodplain, as mapped by the Federal Emergency
15 Management Agency, unless the project includes adequate flood
16 protection as determined by the lead agency.
17 (5) Within a delineated earthquake fault zone, as determined
18 by the State Geologist, in any official maps published by the State
19 Geologist, unless the development complies with applicable seismic
20 protection building code standards adopted by the California
21 Building Standards Commission under the California Building
22 Standards Law (Part 2.5 (commencing with Section 18901) of
23 Division 13 of the Health and Safety Code), and by any local
24 building department under Chapter 12.2 (commencing with Section
25 8875) of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

1 (6) Lands identified for conservation in an adopted natural
2 community conservation plan pursuant to the Natural Community
3 Conservation Planning Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with Section
4 2800) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code), a habitat
5 conservation plan pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act
6 of 1973 (16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq.), or other adopted natural
7 resource protection plan.

8 (7) Habitat for protected species identified as candidate,
9 sensitive, or species of special status by state or federal agencies,
10 fully protected species, or species protected by the federal
11 Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq.),
12 the California Endangered Species Act (Chapter 1.5 (commencing
13 with Section 2050) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code), or
14 the Native Plant Protection Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with
15 Section 1900) of Division 2 of the Fish and Game Code).

16 (8) Lands under conservation easement.

17 (b) A project shall not be exempt from this division pursuant to
18 this section unless all construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance
19 contracts in excess of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for the
20 project are covered by a project labor agreement, as that term is
21 defined in Section 2500 of the Public Contract Code.

22 (c) (1) Before determining that a project is exempt pursuant to
23 this section, the lead agency shall determine, based upon substantial
24 evidence in the record, that the project satisfies the criteria for
25 exemption in subdivisions (a) and (b).

26 (2) In making a determination under this section, the lead agency
27 may rely on publicly available maps and data from state or federal
28 agencies and shall not be required to prepare biological surveys,
29 geotechnical studies, or other technical analyses.

30 (3) The lead agency shall maintain documentation supporting
31 that determination as part of the record of proceedings for the
32 project.

33 (d) Upon determining that a project, activity, or approval is
34 exempt pursuant to this section, the lead agency shall file a notice
35 of exemption described in subdivision (b) of Section 21108 or
36 subdivision (b) of Section 21152, as applicable, with the Office
37 of Land Use and Climate Innovation and the notice shall include
38 a brief description of how the project satisfies the criteria for
39 exemption in subdivision (a).

1 SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to
2 Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because
3 this act provides for offsetting savings to local agencies or school
4 districts that result in no net costs to the local agencies or school
5 districts, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government
6 Code.

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