

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER

September 1, 2026

PROTECTING EATON FIRE SURVIVORS FROM FRAUD, PREDATORY PRACTICES, AND CONTRACTOR SCAMS

Eighteen months after the Eaton Fire, many Altadena residents continue the long and difficult process of rebuilding their homes and their lives. While survivors have shown extraordinary resilience, the complexity of recovery has also created opportunities for bad actors to exploit vulnerable homeowners through contractor fraud, home repair scams, deceptive business practices, and other predatory conduct.

As rebuilding activity continues, protecting consumers is essential to ensuring that residents can recover safely and confidently. Wildfire survivors should have access to clear, accurate information about selecting licensed contractors, understanding home improvement contracts, recognizing common scam tactics, and reporting suspected fraud. Although Los Angeles County has existing consumer protection and enforcement resources, greater coordination of public education and outreach can help prevent fraud before it occurs and ensure residents know where to turn for assistance.

By leveraging departments and community partners, Los Angeles County can strengthen consumer awareness, improve access to trusted resources, and better protect Eaton Fire survivors throughout the rebuilding process.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), in collaboration with the District Attorney’s Office, County Counsel, the Department of Public Works, other relevant County departments, and in consultation with other partners such as the Contractors State License Board to build upon and strengthen existing County consumer protection and wildfire recovery efforts, including within 30 days, convening a Taskforce to address and curb contractor fraud and other scams targeting Eaton Fire survivors.

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MOTION

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2. Direct DCBA, in coordination with the Office of Countywide Communications, within 45 days, to implement an expanded consumer awareness campaign to provide centralized, accessible information via the Recovery LA Website, and to develop communication materials on verifying contractor licenses, understanding home improvement contracts, recognizing common scam tactics, reporting suspected fraud, and accessing other consumer protection resources. The expanded campaign should also include targeted outreach strategies to reach wildfire survivors who may be especially vulnerable to fraud, including older adults, individuals with limited English proficiency, displaced households, and other hard to reach populations.
 - Once developed, DCBA, Aging and Disabilities Department and Countywide Communications should distribute consumer protection materials through existing communication channels, community meetings, recovery resource centers, online platforms, and partnerships with community-based organizations; and integrate the work of the Task Force and the consumer awareness campaign into the Altadena One-Stop Permitting Center.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of DCBA to prepare and execute agreements, and any amendments to existing agreements, approved as to form by County Counsel, with consultants, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, and communications professionals to support the directives of this motion.

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KB:ldbem