



CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION
of WINEGRAPE
GROWERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAWG Statement on Passing of \$19.1 Billion Disaster Assistance Bill by House of Representatives

SACRAMENTO, June 4, 2019 – California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) President John Aguirre has issued the following statement:

In November 2018, in the wake of wildfires that devastated a number of California communities and prevented many growers from selling their 2018 winegrape crop, the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) and other California grower organizations asked Congress to assist in the recovery of adversely affected winegrape growers.

The House of Representatives on June 3 passed a disaster assistance bill that offers up to \$19.1 billion to aid the recovery of communities, businesses and farmers across the country affected by hurricanes, flooding and wildfires. The bill, passed on a bipartisan 354 to 58 vote, includes \$3.005 billion to fund payments for growers affected by a variety of natural disasters that occurred last year and more recently in 2019.

With the bill's passage and the expected signature of the president, California growers who experienced wildfire-related losses in 2018, including losses related to smoke exposure, will be able to apply for assistance payments from the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program (WHIP), which is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency.

CAWG commends those members of the California congressional delegation who voted for the disaster assistance bill, particularly Rep. Mike Thompson (D-St. Helena), who worked hard to ensure WHIP would be available to assist California growers affected by smoke exposure-related losses.

CAWG also wishes to recognize and thank the following organizations that signed onto letters to Congress last November seeking assistance for growers affected by wildfires: Lake County Farm Bureau, Lake County Winegrape Commission, Mendocino County Farm Bureau and Mendocino Winegrowers, Inc.

Additional information:

Press release from House Appropriations Committee (June 4)

<https://appropriations.house.gov/news/press-releases/house-passes-191-billion-bicameral-bipartisan-disaster-relief-package>

Summary of bill

<https://appropriations.house.gov/sites/democrats.appropriations.house.gov/files/Emergency%20Supplemental%20Summary.pdf>

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