



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 5
File #: 18-1034

Board Meeting Date: 11/13/2018

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor David J. Canepa and Supervisor Don Horsley
Subject: Resolution Regarding Senate Bill 821

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution calling for the Office of Emergency Services to adopt the statewide protocol for emergency alerts as established by Senate Bill 821.

BACKGROUND:

On September 21, 2018, California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law Senate Bill 821 which provides a tool for a local jurisdiction to improve communication with its citizens in the event of a disaster.

SB821 would authorize each county including a city and county, to develop a mechanism to access the contact information of resident account holders through the records of a public utility or other agency responsible for water service, waste and recycling services, or other property-related services for the sole purpose of enrolling county residents in a county-operated public emergency warning system.

SB821 would also specify that any county that develops such a mechanism would be required to include a procedure to enable a resident to opt out of the warning system and not use the information gathered for any purpose other than for emergency notification.

DISCUSSION:

California has experienced 6,906 wildfires in 2018, damaging over 1.5 million acres of land and resulting in 14 deaths and dozens of non-fatal injuries.

In many cases, residents affected by the wildfires felt that they did not have adequate access to informative and life-saving information.

In 2008, San Mateo County launched SMC Alert which is a free, opt-in and county-wide emergency

alert notification system via email, cell phones, tablets or voice messages to landlines in order to inform residents in the case of natural disasters and emergencies.

In San Mateo County, only 9 percent of residents are enrolled into SMC alert which means over 690,000 SMC residents do not have direct and immediate information coming from informed local government entities during regional crises or threats of emergency.

Therefore, we request that this Board adopt a resolution that encourages the Office of Emergency Services to adopt the statewide protocol for emergency notifications as allowed under SB821 and to develop an opt-out system for residents who do not want to receive the alerts.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no known fiscal impact of this proposed action.