

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

November 12, 2025

Armando Quintero
Director
California Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296

Dear Mr. Quintero:

In January 2025, several wildfires, including the Palisades fire, devastated Los Angeles County, California. These fires caused billions of dollars in damage to homes and businesses and tragically resulted in loss of life.¹ Public reports have raised questions about Los Angeles's wildfire preparations and the response to the January 2025 wildfires, including the Palisades fire. The Palisades fire is alleged to have been a re-ignition of the earlier Lachman fire that originated as an act of arson in Topanga State Park.² Topanga State Park is under the authority of the Department of Parks and Recreation ("DPR").³

Pursuant to Senate Resolution 94 (119th Cong.), the United States Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (the "Subcommittee") is conducting a review of Los Angeles's wildfire mitigation and suppression efforts, including the response to the Palisades fire. In order to assist the Subcommittee in its review, please provide the following information and records. Unless otherwise stated, the period of time covered by this request is from February 1, 2022, to present.

1. All records⁴ referring or relating to wildfire preparation, suppression, and response (including alerts and evacuations) between December 28, 2024, and the present, including but not limited to the response to the Palisades and Lachman fires.
2. All records referring or relating to the Palisades and Lachman fires, including but not limited to:

¹ Shiyun Li and William Yu, *Economic Impact of Los Angeles Wildfires*, UCLA Anderson School of Management (Mar. 3, 2025), <https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/about/centers/ucla-anderson-forecast/economic-impact-los-angeles-wildfires>; Nadine Yousif, *More than 400 indirect deaths linked to LA wildfires, study suggests*, BBC (Aug. 6, 2025), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx29wjg3vz2o>.

² Richard Winton, *Florida man 'maliciously' started Palisades fire, then tried to cover his tracks, authorities allege*, L.A. Times (Oct. 8, 2025), <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-10-08/palisades-fire-arrest>.

³ California State Parks, Topanga State Park, https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=629.

⁴ "Records" include any written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including resolutions, letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (such as texts, emails, email attachments, and any other electronically-created or stored information), calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether or not they resulted in final documents).

- a. Any after action or other assessment of the cause of the Palisades and Lachman fires, including all communications related to suspected non-natural or man-made causes;
 - b. All records referring or relating to the burn scar from the Lachman fire or whether the Lachman fire was fully extinguished;
 - c. All records referring or relating to acts of arson, suspected acts of arson, or illegal fires committed in or causing damage to Topanga State Park;
 - d. All communications referring or relating to Jonathan Rinderknecht⁵; and
 - e. All communications with residents of the Pacific Palisades.
3. All records referring or relating to prescribed burns in Los Angeles County, including in Topanga State Park, including but not limited to:
 - a. Communications related to delaying prescribed burns for environmental or health and air quality concerns;
 - b. The potential effects on endangered or protected species; and
 - c. Any assessments or communications related to the potential effects of forgoing or delaying a prescribed burn on future wildfire severity.
4. All records referring or relating to response, suppression, and recovery procedures after a fire is ignited on land within the jurisdiction of DPR or State Responsibility Areas, including but not limited to:
 - a. Training manuals and documents;
 - b. Operations manuals and documents;
 - c. Interagency agreements, memoranda of understanding, or letters of agreement with federal, state, or local entities;
 - d. Agreements with Mountain Recreation & Conservation Authority, Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy, or mutual-aid or auto-aid response arrangements with other entities;
 - e. Agreements involving State Responsibility Areas, Mutual Threat Zones, and Aerial Firefighting Contracts; and
 - f. Any draft—current, completed, or active—of an after-action report.
5. All communications referring or relating to wildfire prevention, mitigation, or suppression, including but not limited to the Palisades and Lachman fires, between your agency or departments and any employee or official with the following entities:
 - a. Los Angeles Department of Water and Power;
 - b. Los Angeles Mayor’s Office;
 - c. Los Angeles City Council;
 - d. Office of the Governor of California;
 - e. Los Angeles Fire Department;
 - f. Los Angeles County Fire Department; and
 - g. Any federal agency or department.

⁵ On October 8, 2025, the Acting U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California announced that Jonathan Rinderknecht had been arrested and charged with “maliciously starting what became the Palisades Fire.” See Acting U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli (@USAttyEssayli), X (Oct. 8, 2025, 12:01 pm), <https://x.com/USAttyEssayli/status/1975954598201536880>.

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Please produce this information as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on November 26, 2025. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Subcommittee staff at (202) 224-3721 and (202) 224-0909. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ron" and last name "Johnson" clearly legible.

Senator Ron Johnson
Chairman
Permanent Subcommittee
on Investigations

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rick" and last name "Scott" clearly legible.

Senator Rick Scott
Member
Permanent Subcommittee
on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations