



**Congresswoman**  
**Grace F. Napolitano**  
*Representing California's*  
*38<sup>th</sup> District*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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Contact: Joe Sheehy, 202-225-5256  
[Joe.Sheehy@mail.house.gov](mailto:Joe.Sheehy@mail.house.gov)

### **Napolitano, Sánchez, and Chu Announce \$2 million in Emergency Federal Funding for Paramount Blvd. Bridge after 60 Freeway Fire**

**(Washington, D.C.)** - Today, Congresswomen Grace F. Napolitano (CA-38), Linda Sánchez (CA-39), and Judy Chu (CA-32) announced that U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has released \$2 million in federal funds to help rebuild the Paramount Boulevard Bridge in Montebello. The bridge was destroyed following a tanker truck fire on the 60 Freeway on December 14, 2011. Secretary LaHood decided to release Federal Highway Administration (FHA) Quick Release Emergency Relief Funds for this project following a formal request made yesterday by Congresswomen Napolitano, Sánchez, and Chu.

"This federal funding will allow us to expedite the reconstruction of the Paramount Boulevard bridge and restore a critical thoroughfare for local businesses and commuters," said **Congresswoman Napolitano**. "I thank Sec. LaHood and Gov. Brown for discussing this situation with me on Monday and for their quick response after last week's terrible accident."

"This is a great first step toward restoring the Paramount Bridge," said **Congresswoman Linda Sánchez**. "I applaud Secretary LaHood and the Department of Transportation for their rapid response. This quick infusion of Federal funding helps Caltrans immediately start the reconstruction process which will help alleviate traffic congestion. The 60 Freeway and Paramount Boulevard are crucial for commuting and for commerce, and our residents need these repairs to happen as quickly as possible. "

"This federal funding couldn't come at a better time. With these critical federal resources, Caltrans will be able to more quickly reconstruct the bridge, making it safer for drivers and get traffic moving again," said **Congresswoman Chu**.

## **Background:**

### **Paramount Street Bridge in Montebello Destroyed**

- On Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, a tanker truck carrying 8,800 gallons of gasoline exploded on the 60 Freeway in Montebello as it sat under the Paramount Boulevard Bridge.
- The fire consumed the bridge and compromised its structural integrity.
- Caltrans was forced to destroy the bridge.
- The 60 freeway was closed until Saturday.

### **Emergency Federal Funding**

- The Federal Highway Administration has an **Emergency Relief Program** that provides funds to states to reconstruct roadways and bridges that are destroyed in disasters.
- In order to apply for the emergency funds, the Governor of the State must declare the incident a state of emergency.

### **Congressional Action**

- On Monday, Congresswomen Napolitano and Sánchez both spoke with Governor Brown and urged him to declare the accident a State of Emergency so that Caltrans could seek federal funds. The Governor made the declaration of the State of Emergency on Tuesday.
- On Monday, Congresswoman Napolitano talked with Secretary LaHood about the situation. Congresswoman Napolitano thanked Sec. LaHood for the technical assistance that had been provided so far by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Congresswoman Napolitano requested that Sec. LaHood release Federal Emergency Relief funds to assist Caltrans and Montebello in rebuilding the bridge.
- On Wednesday, Congresswomen Grace F. Napolitano, Linda Sánchez, and Judy Chu sent a letter to Sec. LaHood requesting the federal Emergency Relief funds.
- Today, Sec. LaHood Announced \$2 Million in Quick Release Emergency Relief Funds for the Paramount Boulevard Bridge.

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