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Informational Hearing: The Role of Fairgrounds and Emergency Management

(Sacramento)- Today the Assembly Committee’s on Emergency Management and Agriculture held a joint informational hearing at the State Capitol to assess the vital role of fairgrounds across California during an emergency event. Fairgrounds originally created to host annual fairs and entertainment purposes have become disaster staging areas, evacuation shelters, and temporary healthcare facilities. COVID-19 and recent wildfires have highlighted the important role fairgrounds play in our emergency response.

“I am continually amazed by the role fairgrounds play in the lives and culture of California, and many of them have been called to action during the pandemic. Unable to operate revenue-generating fairs in 2020, I hear the concerns of our fairground leaders. After helping with endless wildfire seasons, serving as mass vaccination testing and vaccination sites, housing thousands of persons, and have no public fairs in the past year- now is the time to take action. I look forward to working with the Governor and legislative leaders on identifying funding opportunities. I have personally seen first-hand the impact of reduced funding combined with heightened need at the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds in Pomona- our communities and survival would not be the same without them.”

“California’s fairgrounds are a vital piece of our state’s emergency response infrastructure and were utilized extensively this past year to assist with both wildfires and COVID-19 testing and vaccine distribution,” said Assemblymember Robert Rivas, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture and Joint Committee on Fairs, Allocations, and Classifications. “We must make sure these fairgrounds are prepared and supported to continue to serve as a lifeline for so many Californians in their time of need. Thank you to Chair Rodriguez, for bringing attention to this important issue, and to my colleagues in the Assembly and Senate for participating in the discussion.”

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Assemblymember Rodriguez ([Twitter](#)) represents the 52nd Assembly District which includes the cities of Chino, Montclair, Ontario, Pomona, and portions of unincorporated Fontana. He is Chair of the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management.