



**National Association of Judiciary Interpreters  
& Translators**

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The Honorable Alberto Torrico  
State Capitol, Room 3160  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB615 - Support**

Dear Assemblymember Torrico:

The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT), a professional association with over 1,000 language specialists in the legal interpreting and translation field, is writing in support of AB 615 to improve California's emergency preparedness and response system to limited English proficient (LEP) individuals.

California is confronted by high risks of natural disasters, as well as the risk of pandemic health hazards, biological warfare and terrorist events. As home to over 6 million LEP persons, critical challenges face us that must be addressed in order to save lives, minimize injuries and damage, and protect the health, stability and economy of our state.

In any emergency situation, multilingual communication with the public is critical for conveying important instructions and procedures. Hurricane Katrina demonstrated that communications in languages other than English were inadequate or non-existent, endangering the lives of thousands of residents who did not receive or understand evacuation orders.

Serious communication problems not only affect people's rights, equal access, equal protection, health, life, and safety, but also our national security. Only through strengthening partnerships between the Office of Emergency Services and LEP stakeholders, as proposed in the bill, can we provide adequate emergency services and ensure a safer California for all residents.

NAJIT commends you for your foresight and leadership in authoring this legislation.

Sincerely yours,

Alexander Rainof, Ph.D.  
Chair of the Board of Directors  
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators