

City Council

Mayor Jill McLewis

Vice Mayor Sandra Maurer

Councilmember Phill Carter

Councilmember Neysa Hinton

Councilmember Stephen Zollman



City of Sebastopol

City Manager

Mary Gourley

mgourley@Cityofsebastopol.gov

July 8, 2026

TO:

California Association of Joint Powers Authorities (CAJPA)

California Intergovernmental Risk Authority (CIRA) Tort Reform Coalition

Re: Letter of Support for Meaningful Tort Reform for California Public Entities

Dear CAJPA and CIRA Coalition Partners:

On behalf of the City of Sebastopol, I am pleased to express our support for the statewide coalition advocating for meaningful tort reform in civil actions against public entities.

The City of Sebastopol, as a member agency of the California Intergovernmental Risk Authority (CIRA), recognizes the significant and growing impact that rising liability costs are having on public agencies across California. Recent data confirms that public-entity liability costs have tripled in the last seven years and now exceed \$7 billion in known exposure, with costs projected to grow another 70 percent by 2027–28. These escalating costs divert critical taxpayer resources away from essential public services such as public safety, infrastructure, education, and community programs.

The City supports a balanced approach to tort reform that:

- Provides reasonable caps on damages in civil actions against public entities;
- Restores proportional (several) liability so that public agencies are responsible only for the share of harm attributable to their own conduct; and
- Establishes appropriate evidentiary standards for claims involving decades-old conduct where records and witnesses are no longer available.

We believe these reforms are necessary to preserve the financial sustainability of local governments while still ensuring that survivors of harm receive justice and meaningful compensation.

The City of Sebastopol hereby authorizes the use of its official logo in coalition advocacy materials and future communications related to this important effort.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue. The City of Sebastopol stands with our fellow public agencies in support of responsible tort reform that protects both taxpayers and the essential services Californians rely upon.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

Jill McLewis 7C6BCED0A8914A1...

Mayor City of Sebastopol