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[Trump's Opportunity to Help Fire Victims: Use Real Estate Expertise to Forge a Bipartisan Deal with Newsom and Bass](#)

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Following the Los Angeles catastrophic fires, President Trump's January 24th visit began an opportunity to use his real estate and construction expertise to build a recovery plan, help diminish the worsened homeless crisis already in place, and make a strange-bedfellows coalition with Governor Gavin Newsom and Mayor Karen Bass for expediting the assistance. Media reported his interface with Governor Newsome was "civil", and both offered to work together. In so doing, President Trump would justifiably gain enormous credit by facilitating help to desperate residents who lived in homeless shelters to regular houses to wealthy mansions alike, as well as businesses devastated by burnt-out buildings.

Trump has often discussed his real estate prowess before becoming President. He discussed many of these exploits in his book, *The Art of the Deal*. With the upcoming transition to his new administration, Trump now has the chance to put his expertise to use.

The recent wildfires in Los Angeles have wreaked havoc across the city and region, leading to many deaths and destroying many homes and businesses. Experts estimate more than 16,000 [houses](#) and other structures have been lost. As a result, this crisis has displaced more than [90,000 people](#). However, California is no stranger to these types of catastrophes. In 2018, the Camp Fire resulted in Paradise losing 15,000 homes. While seven years have passed since that horrific event, according to Mayor of Paradise, Steve Crowder, [only about 2,900 single-family homes and 550 multi-family homes have been rebuilt](#). When the fires in Los Angeles have finally been subdued, displaced citizens will be faced with a similar housing shortage. Without substantial intervention, it could take decades for the number of homes in Los Angeles to reach pre-fire numbers.

The aftermath of the wildfires exists under the backdrop of a growing homelessness crisis experienced by the United States. According to a report from the HUD Annual Report, homelessness surged by 18% from January 23 to January 24th, the highest level on record. As many as a million people across the United States live in shelters, tents, or cars instead of homes. This homelessness crisis is [especially prevalent in California](#), which currently holds the highest number of people experiencing homelessness in any state according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The current fires in Los Angeles and the surrounding areas, with the increase in displaced people, put a greater strain on organizations that run evacuation and homeless shelters. The toxic and odious smells and poisoning in structures remain.

The 17,000 beds provided by the 484 homeless shelters in the county are not enough to accommodate the more the 90,000 displaced people.

In response to this crisis, some Republicans insist on placing strings on Aid, an unprecedented move that would delay crucial funds. Rather than strings, incentives could be provided for fire-proofing homes and businesses. President Trump mandated no "strings" on North Carolina's hurricane victims.

Trump could gather bipartisan support by pulling on his experience as a real-estate developer and construction expert to build more fire-proof homes. [As explained by architect Greg Chasen to Bloomberg, there are several solutions policymakers can implement to create new fire-proof homes.](#) For instance, removing attic vents to prevent sparks from getting inside the roof. In addition, reducing the amount of roof lines, dormers, or other pop-outs that are vulnerable to a fire. The use of different materials like Class A wood as well as tempered glass can also shield the interiors of homes. Other methods, like sprinkler systems on the roofs of buildings, could also reduce the scale of a future fire crisis. Modernizing building codes for fire safety in homes could also be crucial to this effort.

While this relationship between Trump, Newsom, and Bass would first be a marriage of convenience, it would achieve a compromise our nation desperately needs. It would be remiss for Trump to ignore a chance to address one of the most critical issues affecting the nation right off the bat in his new Administration.

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