UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA DISASTER RESILIENCE NETWORK

SB 895: Supportive Note

Dear Senator Wiener,

I hope this note finds you well. I wanted to briefly introduce myself and UCDRN, a UC-wide platform that connects researchers and practitioners across and beyond the University of California system working on disaster resilience, infrastructure risk, public health, emergency management, and related fields.

We have been following the development of SB 895 with great interest, including its upcoming hearing in the Senate Health Committee. The effort to strengthen statewide coordination around resilience priorities is both timely and necessary as California faces increasingly complex hazard environments.

During this month's meeting of the California Seismic Safety Commission, Chair Rabbitt shared my support by reading into the public record UCDRN's interest in supporting the state's evolving resilience strategy and capacities. In that statement, we noted that seismic risk remains a foundational component of California's hazard landscape, particularly because earthquakes can trigger cascading failures across infrastructure, energy, water, housing, and emergency systems - what I have referred to as "Seismic+."

California has long led the world in seismic safety policy. The next frontier is ensuring that this leadership is integrated into a broader understanding of **compounding disasters and polycrises**, where seismic risk intersects with climate extremes, public health threats, aging infrastructure, energy and transportation disruptions, and rapid technological change. These risks increasingly occur in overlapping and reinforcing ways, creating systemic pressures that challenge traditional approaches to preparedness, response, and recovery. We are at an "all hands on deck" crossroads, where boundaries of all kinds must be bridged - particularly at a moment when traditional sources of federal support are becoming less certain and less able to drive innovation at the scale required.

In reading SB 895, I was encouraged to see this understanding reflected so clearly, as UCDRN was forged around the same imperative. Our leadership and UC-wide teams reflect the interdisciplinary and applied focus that is critical - not optional - for effective coordination in service to the State. The network is co-chaired by former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security and former President of the University of California Janet Napolitano, and includes leaders whose work has directly informed the State's Climate Assessments and related resilience efforts. Together with colleagues across the UC system, this leadership brings deep expertise

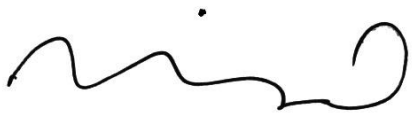
spanning seismic risk, climate science, infrastructure systems, public health, and emerging technologies.

Importantly, UCDRN was established to help coordinate this breadth of talent, ensuring that the University of California can operate not as a collection of individual efforts, but as a connected, systemwide resource capable of supporting the State's most complex resilience challenges. As SB 895 advances, we see an opportunity to help ensure that California is positioned to translate strong policy into equally strong implementation, particularly as disasters increasingly occur in compounding and cascading ways that require new approaches to coordination and action. If helpful, we would welcome the opportunity to support your office as SB 895 evolves by identifying relevant subject-matter experts and helping align UC expertise with the State's resilience priorities supporting clear articulation of key resilience considerations, and, over time, helping ensure that the State's objectives are effectively translated into coordinated action. We would also welcome the opportunity for a brief introductory conversation at your convenience.

We would also be happy to convene a small technical roundtable of UC researchers who work on seismic risk, compounding disasters and polycrises, and cascading infrastructure failures, including Amir AghaKouchak, PhD (cc'd), Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth System Science at UC Irvine and Chair of UCDRN's systemwide Research Armada. We would be glad to help bring this expertise to bear if it would be useful to your team as the legislation develops.

Thank you for your leadership on these issues, and please do not hesitate to reach out if a brief conversation would be helpful.

With warm regards,



Nicolás Alberto Pascal; Founder & Director || UCDRN