Eaton Fire
Survivors Network

How Edison Can Launch Urgent Housing Relief to Keep Families Housed

By Survivors of the Eaton Fire

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Executive Summary

Ten months after the Eaton Fire, thousands of survivors remain displaced as insurance coverage runs out and mental health collapses. Recovery has stalled not because survivors lack determination, but because we lack cash flow.

According to the Department of Angels October 2025 report, eight in ten Eaton Fire families still cannot return home, and most will lose housing coverage in the coming months. Without immediate action, mass displacement is imminent.

Edison International now has new, regulator-approved revenues and a third-quarter performance that far exceeded Wall Street expectations. The company can and should front up to $2.4 billion in urgent housing relief using its existing credit facilities, then reconcile those payments later with the California Wildfire Fund.

No survivor should ever have to surrender their legal rights just to stay safely housed.

> *"This has caused so much stress, pain, agony. We are traumatized for life. I have not been able to go home due to the smoke damage. I have moved my family eight times since January. I am running out of insurance coverage and still displaced."*

Families Are Running Out of Time

Most Eaton Fire survivors are still displaced, and temporary housing coverage is expiring. In an October 2025 survey of more than 2,000 survivors, eight in ten families still cannot return home, and more than half will lose housing coverage within months.

Parents are skipping meals to make rent. Seniors are sleeping in cars outside the neighborhoods that once were their homes. Every week, more survivors reach a breaking point. Local mental health providers report a sharp rise in crisis calls and suicidal ideation. This is not recovery. It's a humanitarian emergency.

> *"The expense of this ordeal, emotionally and financially, has impacted our family so much that my daughter may have to put college on hold. We may have to walk away from our home of 25 years flushing our equity down the drain because it's not safe to live in. And finally the impact on my marriage. I'm not sure my husband and I will see our way through this together."*

Why Edison Can and Must Act Now

Edison International and its utility subsidiary, Southern California Edison, are not struggling. Their third-quarter 2025 report, released October 28, shows healthy revenues, strong profits, and sweeping state protections that have locked in stability for years to come.

Here is the plain English version. Edison's financial strength this quarter comes from Californians. The California Public Utilities Commission approved SCE's 2025 General Rate Case authorizing $9.66 billion in annual revenue, an $880 million increase over 2024. Because the decision arrived late, regulators also allowed SCE to collect $902 million in retroactive revenue for January through September 2025, to be recovered over the next two years.

In simple terms, the state raised rates and gave SCE back pay. That is a permanent $880 million bump, plus nearly $1 billion more spread over two years, all funded by customers through our monthly bills.

The numbers show up in the quarter. Edison reported $832 million in quarterly profit, up $316 million from the same time last year. Core earnings per share jumped to $2.34, beating Wall Street expectations by a wide margin. The company reaffirmed a 5 to 7 percent long-term earnings growth target and narrowed 2025 guidance to $5.95 to $6.20 per share.

On the earnings call, CEO Pedro J. Pizarro told investors:

> "We have made significant progress on the regulatory front this year, further de-risking our financial outlook and bolstering our ability to deliver for customers and investors."

That de-risking is driven by new law. Senate Bill 254 created an $18 billion continuation account for future wildfire costs and allows utilities to securitize wildfire claims before CPUC review. Ordinary companies do not get that privilege. The practical effect is clear. The law moves wildfire-settlement risk from shareholders to ratepayers and taxpayers, while smoothing cash flow for utilities.

Journalists have spelled it out. The Los Angeles Times reported that "ratepayers — not shareholders — will now bear the full cost of wildfire settlements above the state's Wildfire Fund."

https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2025-10-18/edison-benefits-from-fine-print-in-newsoms-last-minute-utility-legislation

Additional coverage confirms that California taxpayers and customers have already poured tens of billions into new wildfire-backstop funds:

https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2025-07-31/governor-wants-another-18-billion-to-shore-up-state-wildfire-fund https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2025-09-10/electric-customers-to-pay-9-billion-more-to-state-wildfire-fund-under-proposed-bill

Credit agencies responded. Fitch removed Edison from negative watch. Moody's reaffirmed a stable outlook. S&P confirmed investment-grade status. Edison now holds more than $4 billion in available credit and $364 million in cash, backed by these regulator-approved revenues and public guarantees.

Put it together. Californians have already stabilized Edison's finances through higher rates, a state wildfire safety net, and laws that guarantee utility cash flow during catastrophes. Shareholders and executives are secure because the public absorbed the risk.

Now Edison must do its part. Fronting $2.4 billion in urgent housing relief is not generosity. It is the least Edison can do. Californians should not be rebuilding the company's balance sheet while we struggle to keep a roof overhead from a fire its equipment caused.

> *"We're paying Edison's profits every month on our bills, while sleeping in borrowed rooms. It can't be that ratepayers enrich shareholders while survivors go homeless."*

Edison's Duty to Keep Survivors Housed Until We Get Home

When a fire makes a home uninhabitable, California law requires insurers to provide 36 months of Additional Living Expense coverage, plus six-month extensions for good cause.

As the company that caused the fire, Edison has an even greater duty. It should not provide less than what insurers, who are only secondary to the harm, are required to pay.

Without sustained housing relief, many survivors will face long-term housing insecurity or even lose their homes altogether. Temporary housing costs go far beyond rent: deposits, utilities, storage, moving, duplicate housing expenses, higher food and transportation costs, child and elder care. Every month of delay deepens financial and emotional duress.

Because Edison's negligence destroyed our homes, it must ensure survivors can keep a roof over our heads until we can safely return or rebuild.

The CCRC, the Cash Flow Gap, and Edison's Role

The California Catastrophe Response Council (CCRC) is charged with getting Wildfire Fund dollars out quickly. But by law, those funds cannot go directly to survivors, they must flow first through Edison.

That structure creates a cash flow gap. The state's goal is speed, but Edison's incentive is delay. The company controls settlement timing to limit its liability exposure, which leaves survivors waiting for funds the state already allocated.

Edison can close that gap now by fronting up to $2.4 billion in urgent housing relief from its existing credit facilities, then reconciling with the Wildfire Fund after settlements. Bridging that gap is the minimum required to prevent mass displacement and restart recovery.

A Model for Urgent Housing Relief

Edison has the financial tools to immediately stabilize families and restart recovery. This plan covers both homeowners and renters so every displaced family, regardless of ownership status, can remain safely housed until recovery is complete.

Estimated scope: About 12,000 households affected by the Eaton Fire (6,000 total loss, 6,000 smoke-damaged), representing up to $2.4 billion in immediate housing relief.

This relief does not replace or reduce future compensation from Edison's settlement plan. It is a bridge — a humanitarian measure to keep families safe while rebuilding unfolds over years.

Component	Amount	Purpose
Forward-looking housing and living support	Up to $150,000 per household	Temporary housing costs, remediation, rebuilding, and other displacement-related expenses including transportation, childcare, and elder care
Reimbursement of expenses already paid	Up to $50,000 per household	Relocation, debris cleanup, temporary utilities, essential repairs

Amounts would be determined by verified housing costs, scaled to reflect each family's circumstances. Most families would receive less than the full $200,000, with payments adjusted based on documented needs such as housing duration, remediation scope, and displacement-related expenses.

Eligibility: Households directly impacted by the fire, including those with smoke damage resulting in loss of habitability.

No waiver of rights: Payments would not affect legal claims.

Direct payment: Funds issued directly to households, not attorneys.

Reconciliation: These payments would serve as advances on future wildfire settlements or Wildfire Fund recoveries. Once settlements are finalized, Edison would be reimbursed to the extent these payments are covered by the California Wildfire Fund (CWF). Any portions Edison excludes from CWF submissions – such as remediation and housing – would remain Edison's direct responsibility.

> *"We're still displaced from a smoke-damaged home. Our daughters lost everything to lead contamination. We're exhausted and desperate to get back home."*

Let Families Breathe First –Why Urgent Housing Relief Must Be Separate from Settlements

Edison's current plan requires survivors to sign legal liability waivers before receiving aid. That structure may protect the company's balance sheet, but it violates the principles of fairness and public policy.

Urgent housing relief and legal settlements serve entirely different purposes.

- One is humanitarian—to keep people alive and sheltered.
- The other is compensatory—to resolve long-term damages.

Combining the two forces families to make irreversible legal decisions while they are still in acute crisis, without safe housing or mental stability.

California law recognizes that consent obtained under duress is not valid consent. Families deciding whether to waive rights while facing eviction, homelessness, or hunger cannot meaningfully exercise free will. Due process depends on conditions of safety and stability.

Public policy must protect survivors from being coerced into signing settlements simply to keep a roof overhead. When urgent relief is tied to waivers, the choice becomes coercive: sign away your rights or risk homelessness.

Edison can stop this now. The company can front urgent housing funds immediately, without waivers, using its existing credit lines, and later reconcile those costs through the California Wildfire Fund. This ensures survivors remain safely housed and preserves the integrity of any future settlements.

This approach would also protect the integrity of any future settlements. By separating emergency relief from compensation, Edison avoids future legal challenges claiming settlements were signed under duress, and the CCRC can demonstrate that the state's wildfire recovery process meets standards of fairness and consent.

Let families breathe first. Then, and only then, can fair and lawful settlements follow.

How the Relief Can Be Structured

Edison can act now through a survivor trust administered by an independent, credible nonprofit, such as the California Community Foundation (CCF), which already manages large-scale wildfire recovery funds. Funds would be distributed directly to verified survivors, with public reporting and independent audits.

The Eaton Fire Survivors Network, together with many of the 200 community-based nonprofits under the Eaton Fire Collaborative, stands ready to assist with outreach, intake, and verification.

Precedent: California Utilities Have Advanced Urgent Relief Before

California investor-owned utilities have provided interim relief before final legal resolutions.

PG&E – Butte Fire (2015-2016)

- PG&E created an urgent-relief fund shortly after the September 2015 Butte Fire, paying $50,000 to homeowners and $10,000 to renters for immediate aid. calaverasenterprise.com

- Related financial reference: PG&E Corp. 2016 Form 10-K, Note 13 "Wildfire Claims and Insurance" (link to general SEC filings page) — https://investor.pgecorp.com/financials/sec-filings/default.aspx

PG&E – Fire Victim Trust (2020 onward)

- Under PG&E's bankruptcy plan, a $13.5 billion Fire Victim Trust was established; preliminary payments were issued to claimants prior to full claim processing. SEC+2PG&E Lawsuit Guide+2

- Additional coverage: North Bay Business Journal, Nov 2020 — https://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/article/news/california-wildfire-victims-in-line-for-25000-payments-from-pge-trust-th/

San Diego Gas & Electric – 2007 Wildfires

- SDG&E (a Sempra Energy subsidiary) created the "Community Recovery Fund" and distributed millions in immediate relief grants while litigation was pending.
- Program summary: Sempra Energy 2008 Form 10-K (includes wildfire-liabilities discussion) — https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1032208/000008652109000010/sempra_10k2008.htm SEC

Even utilities in bankruptcy have delivered near-term, cash-flow-positive relief using standard financing tools. Edison is profitable, investment grade, and has more than $4 billion in committed credit capacity. The precedent is clear and the capacity is present.

The Case for Acting Now

1. Prevent Deepening Trauma

Housing instability is driving exhaustion, anxiety, and mental health crises. Immediate stabilization would stop the spiral and save lives from collapse.

2. Reduce Long-Term Liability

Survivors pushed into bankruptcy, homelessness, or severe trauma will inevitably seek higher settlements. Early, voluntary assistance reduces total future payouts, lowers litigation costs, and mitigates wrongful-death and emotional-distress exposure.

3. Protect the Wildfire Fund and Ratepayer Money

Edison can front housing relief now and later offset it through the Wildfire Fund, reducing overall costs while protecting ratepayers.

4. Prevent Long-Term Health Costs and Legal Exposure

The Eaton Fire spread heavy metals, asbestos, and carcinogens across our homes and communities. Families need safe remediation now. Funding testing and cleanup prevents chronic illness and protects both Edison and the California Wildfire Fund from decades of liability.

5. Jump-Start the Eaton Fire Recovery and Free Up the Local Housing Market

Immediate cash infusion for housing and remediation will revive local economies and restore stability across the region. Getting standing-home survivors safely back into homes also frees up scarce rental housing, easing local market pressure and expanding options for long-term displaced residents.

6. Basic Accountability

Edison has already benefited from a taxpayer- and ratepayer-backed bailout. Using its balance sheet now to keep survivors safely housed is not charity. It's accountability.

Conclusion

Recovery has stalled because survivors cannot access the funds we need to remediate and rebuild. The median recovery gap of $200,000 per family will explode as temporary housing coverage expires. Without immediate intervention, mass displacement is inevitable.

The **Eaton Fire Survivors Network**, a grassroots community of more than 8,500 survivors, stands ready to work with Edison and the CCRC to get aid flowing now. Our 51-page report, *Fix What You Broke*, outlines practical, community-tested steps to strengthen Edison's plan and deliver relief efficiently.

With its new rate approvals, guaranteed back payments, and the protections of Senate Bill 254, Edison has both the means and the duty to act. Fronting $2.4 billion in urgent housing relief is not a bailout. It is accountability, and an act of care for the communities Edison powers every day.

Use the balance sheet built on our power bills to keep our families alive, our children safe, and our communities whole. Then we can finally get home.

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