



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**\$5 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDING NOW AVAILABLE TO HELP BAY AREA, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HOMEOWNERS BE EARTHQUAKE PREPARED**

*California Residential Mitigation Program Opens Registration for New Soft-Story Retrofit Program*

**Sacramento, CA** – California homeowners in some Bay Area and Southern California cities will be eligible for a seismic retrofit grant of up to \$13,000. Starting today and continuing through May 31, 2023, qualified homeowners in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Pasadena can apply for grants to strengthen their soft-story homes against earthquake damage. These funds are available thanks to a Hazard Mitigation Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and are administered by the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The Earthquake Soft-Story (ESS) pilot program is part of the California Residential Mitigation Program (CRMP).

CRMP was created by the California Earthquake Authority (CEA) and Cal OES in 2011 to help Californians strengthen their houses against earthquake damage through incentive programs. The first of these programs, Earthquake Brace + Bolt, has already awarded grants to nearly 20,000 homeowners to complete a retrofit.

Soft-story homes that may qualify for this pilot program have one floor of living space built above a garage. These structures are vulnerable to damage because they may not be able to withstand the lateral movement from earthquake shaking. Houses with this condition may be prone to partial or full collapse during an earthquake.

“The launch of the Earthquake Soft-Story pilot program will help eligible Bay Area and Southern California homeowners prepare for the next big earthquake by offsetting the cost of completing a seismic retrofit,” said Glenn Pomeroy, CEO of the California Earthquake Authority (CEA). “The ESS program can help homeowners protect their families and their investments, and we encourage those residing in ESS ZIP Codes to apply for funding during the registration period.”

**Beginning April 25 through May 31, 2023**, eligible homeowners can apply for retrofit funding at [www.EarthquakeSoftStory.com](http://www.EarthquakeSoftStory.com). Here they can also find detailed program information, select from a list of FEMA-trained, California licensed general contractors and view the full list of eligible ZIP Codes. These ESS grants will be available to qualifying homeowners in 82 ZIP Codes.

Participating homeowners will be selected through a random drawing and notified via email if they have been selected or if they have been placed on the waitlist, after registration closes.

We anticipate awarding approximately 375 grants up to \$13,000 each depending on the type of house and the appropriate retrofit. Making a soft-story home more resistant to earthquake damage can be as straightforward

as having a licensed contractor install new plywood sheathing or steel reinforcements on each side of the garage door and bracing the perimeter walls of the garage.

“The growth and success of our Earthquake Brace + Bolt program has allowed us to take the next step to help more Californians strengthen their homes against the threat of an earthquake,” said Janiele Maffei, Chief Mitigation Officer for CEA. “Because California is among the most earthquake-prone states in the country and because of the vulnerability of soft-story homes, many Californians are living in a soft-story building that is a prime candidate for a retrofit. And we’re always looking for additional contractors to get trained to do this important work.”

Licensed contractors interested in participating should go to [this section](#) of the CRMP website where they can find all the resources they need to get started in the program. CRMP offers free FEMA training, free marketing materials and free listings to general contractors with a valid California license (Type A or B).

#### **About the Earthquake Soft Story (ESS) Program**

Established by the California Residential Mitigation Program, ESS offers grants to eligible California homeowners to help defray their retrofit costs to reduce potential damage from earthquakes. A residential seismic retrofit makes a house more resistant to earthquake activity. For more information, please click [here](#).

#### **About the California Residential Mitigation Program (CRMP)**

CRMP was established in 2011 to help Californians strengthen their homes against damage from earthquakes. CRMP is a joint powers authority created by the California Earthquake Authority and the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. For more information, please visit <https://www.CaliforniaResidentialMitigationProgram.com/About-CRMP>.

#### **About Earthquake Brace + Bolt (EBB)**

Established by the California Residential Mitigation Program, EBB offers up to \$3,000 to help California homeowners retrofit their house to reduce potential damage from earthquakes. Residential seismic retrofits bolt the house to its foundation and add bracing, if required, around the perimeter of the crawl space, making it more resistant to earthquake activity. For more information, please visit [www.EarthquakeBraceBolt.com](http://www.EarthquakeBraceBolt.com).

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