

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
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February 20, 2018

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
State Capitol Building, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814
VIA FAX: 916-651-4911

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
California State Senate
State Capitol Building, Room 2059
Sacramento, CA 95814
VIA FAX: (916) 327-1997

RE: SB 827 (Wiener) Planning and Zoning.

Dear Senators Wiener and Skinner:

The City of Albany appreciates and applauds the work you have done to address the housing crisis in California. We recognize that the Bay region and the State are in a housing crisis, brought on by the high demand for housing and the paucity of construction over the past twenty years. Overly burdensome regulations and local nimbyism in some communities are partially to blame for this shortfall, as well as the creation of jobs without commensurate housing requirements or production. These issues are challenging, but must be addressed. However, we oppose SB 827 in its current form.

Exempting large-scale developments from General Plans, Housing Elements, and zoning ordinances goes against the principles of local democracy and public engagement. Public hearings allow members of the community to inform their representative of their support or concerns when planning documents are developed. Public engagement leads to better projects. Disregarding such processes will increase public distrust in government and could lead to ballot measures dealing with growth management, curtail expansion of public transit, and impede smart growth policies.

We realize SB 827 is likely to undergo some changes during the legislative process and we have several suggestions to make this bill more acceptable to our communities:

- Link expanded developer rights to the success of a city's RHNA goals
- Add affordable housing requirement to the bill
- Allow cities to maintain reasonable design review standards to exterior design
- Height standard should be linked to lot size, street dimensions and existing height requirements
- Include a provision allowing more housing to be built in urban areas where jobs are being added but no additional housing has been built

Please consider these and other reasonable changes to this Bill. We believe that legislation that addresses our State's housing crisis must include the needs of all income levels as well as having well-functioning public transit as a core component. Transit systems which are efficient and well-funded, housing that is tied to jobs created, and design standards which reflect the culture of our individual communities must be part of any long term solution to housing issues,

Sincerely,



Peggy McQuaid
Mayor
City of Albany

cc: Assembly Member Tony Thurmond, assemblymember.thurmond@assemblyca.gov
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