



September 11, 2022

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Legislation To Promote Affordable Housing

Dear Governor Newsom,

As your constituents, we stand with Abundant Housing LA in respectfully urging you to sign AB 2097 (Friedman) into law. This bill would remove minimum automobile parking requirements within a half mile of major transit stops, with some exceptions. Off-street parking could still be built voluntarily under the bill, but local parking mandates would be removed. This policy will make housing more affordable and foster a more balanced, sustainable transportation system.

There is extensive academic literature on the harms to society caused by minimum parking requirements. Much of this groundbreaking research was developed in California at public universities such as UCLA. Parking requirements increase the cost of housing both directly and by reducing the number of homes that developers propose to build, which contributes to housing scarcity. Another result is encouraging automobile use, which increases greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, land consumption, traffic congestion and traffic collisions, at an enormous cost to society. Parking requirements act as a subsidy to motorists, paid by those who don't own cars or don't drive for a particular trip. For example, if you walk to a store, the cost of the parking lot is included in the goods you buy and you effectively subsidize the people who drive to the store. If your household only owns one car, but your city requires two spaces for the apartment you're renting, you must pay higher rent for parking you can't even use. That's unfair and unsustainable. Parking requirements make solving California's biggest problems, housing affordability and climate change, much more difficult.

Some opponents of AB 2097 have argued that it will undermine state density bonus law or local density bonus programs, but the evidence does not bear that out. In fact, the opposite is true. San Diego recently adopted a very similar policy and saw a massive increase in the production of housing, and especially affordable housing, as a result. The Mayor of San Diego is part of the vast support coalition for this bill that has worked tirelessly for nearly two years to bring parking reform to your desk.

We have also supported three other pieces of legislation that will advance affordable housing.

SB 679 (*Los Angeles County Regional Housing Finance Act*) provides for the establishment of a special district in Los Angeles County that will support and finance housing development with special beneficiary districts that are authorized to promote affordable housing development.

AB 2011 (*Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022*) authorizes a development proponent to submit an application for a multifamily housing development that is subject to a streamlined, ministerial approval process and not subject to a conditional use permit if the development satisfies specified objective planning standards.,

And SB 886 (*California Environmental Quality Act*) gives an environmental impact exemption to public universities for university housing development projects.

Our state must be a beacon of hope for the nation, at a time of multiple overlapping crises in America, from climate to civil rights. California must lead on these issues and be a refuge for people who want to be free and solve big problems together. We can't do that unless we solve our housing affordability crisis. AB 2097, SB 679, AB 2011 and SB 886 are an excellent start at giving hope to people who are struggling to pay rent and wondering if they can hang on in the state they have called home. Please seize this opportunity to keep California at the cutting edge of progressive policymaking. We respectfully urge you to sign all four bills into law today!

Sincerely,
Print Name _____

Address _____