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May 26, 2022

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Committee on Housing and Community Development
1020 N Street, Suite 156
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2011 (Wicks) Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022
Notice of Opposition (As amended 4/18/2022)

Dear Assembly Member Wicks:

The City of Vista opposes your measure, AB 2011, which would require cities to ministerially approve, without condition or discretion, certain affordable housing and mixed-use housing developments in zones where office, retail, or parking are a principally permitted use regardless of any inconsistency with a local government's general plan, specific plan, zoning ordinance, or regulation.

Housing affordability and homelessness are among the most critical issues facing California cities like Vista. Affordably priced homes are out of reach for many people, and housing is not being built fast enough to meet the current or projected needs of people living in the state. Cities lay the essential groundwork for housing production through planning and zoning new projects in their communities based on extensive public input and engagement, state housing laws, and the needs of the building industry. Importantly, cities like Vista are currently updating housing plans to identify sites for more than two million additional housing units.

AB 2011 disregards this state-mandated local planning effort and forces cities to allow housing developments in nearly all areas of their jurisdiction. The bill undermines cities' multiyear planning processes and questions the rationale for the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) process.

Eliminating opportunities for public review of housing developments goes against the principles of transparency and public engagement. Public hearings allow members of the community to inform their representatives of their support or concerns. "Streamlining" in the context of AB 2011 is a shortcut around public input. Developers should hear from residents who share concerns about traffic, parking, and other development impacts. Public engagement often leads to better projects. Disregarding community input will increase public distrust in government and may result in additional efforts by voters to restrict growth.

The City of Vista is committed to being part of the solution to the housing shortfall across all income levels and will work collaboratively with you and other stakeholders on legislative proposals that will spur much needed housing construction without disregarding the state-mandated local planning process and important public engagement.

For these reasons, the City of Vista opposes AB 2011.

Sincerely,

Judy Ritter
Mayor

cc. Office of Senator Patricia Bates, Cynthia.Bryant@sen.ca.gov
Office of Assemblymember Tasha Boerner Horvath, Celia.Mata@asm.ca.gov
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