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July 5, 2022

The Honorable Anna Caballero
California State Senate
Chair, Senate Governance & Finance Committee
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 916 (Salas) Zoning: Accessory Dwelling Units: Bedroom Addition –
OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Chair Caballero,

The City of Vista respectfully opposes AB 916 (Salas), which was recently amended to increase the height maximum of ADUs from 16 to 18 feet on all parcels and to 25 feet for multifamily or single-family parcels located within one half-mile of transit. This bill also adds a confusing provision that sets a minimum height requirement of 25 feet for ADUs that are attached to a primary single-family residence.

Current law authorizes cities and counties to restrict ADU height to 16 feet, thus helping ensure that ADUs blend into the existing neighborhood. Mandating that local jurisdictions permit two- to potentially three-story ADUs is completely contrary to the stated belief that ADUs are a way to increase density in a modest fashion that is not disruptive to established communities.

Furthermore, shoehorning a 25-foot structure into a backyard of a single-story ranch-style home, that is within one half-mile of public transit, calls to question the idea that these are “accessory dwelling units” designed for multigenerational housing. The bill also creates confusion as ADUs attached to a primary residence are called “junior ADUs” and this measure creates a nuance where ADUs could conceivably be equal in size or larger than the primary residence it’s attached to and creates a minimum height requirement of 25 feet.

AB 916 would substantially alter the look and feel of a community. ADUs by their nature are efficient units that do not require the same height considerations as a single-family home. Furthermore, the bill as previously drafted sought simply permit second story additions to garages, the global height increase added to the bill no longer seeks to apply in situations where the ADU is being added on top of an existing structure.

The City of Vista opposes efforts that restrict the City’s authority in meeting Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requirements and limit local control. For these reasons, the City of Vista opposes AB 916.

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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