



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

455 NORTH REXFORD DRIVE • BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA 90210

Julian A. Gold MD, Mayor

February 15, 2019

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Housing Committee
State Capitol, Room 4203
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **SB 50 (Wiener) Planning and zoning: housing development: equitable communities incentive.**
City of Beverly Hills – OPPOSE

Dear Chair Wiener,

On behalf of the City of Beverly Hills, I write to you in strong **OPPOSITION** to your **SB 50 (Wiener)**. This bill would strip local governments of long-held land use authorities which form the bedrock of local government and place them under the purview of the state. Specifically, **SB 50 (Wiener)** would remove local control over housing development in areas within a ½ mile radius of a major transit stop or a ¼ mile radius of a high-quality bus corridor. Additionally, while the definition on a job-rich housing project is rather vague, the intent of the definition to include proximity to jobs, areas with high median incomes relative to the region, and high-quality public schools and could potentially be interpreted as making this legislation apply to the entirety of Beverly Hills.

The City of Beverly Hills is a city of over 34,000 residents that sits on 5.7 square miles, translating close to 6,000 residents per square mile. This is similar to the density of Alameda and Pasadena while being more dense than San Jose and San Diego. This density excludes over 150,000 daily workers and visitors to the City.

Sixty percent of our residents are renters, and many live in multifamily dwellings. Beverly Hills is a transit-rich city and the site of two future subway stations. As the City is relatively small and already built-out, this bill will have an immense impact on our community.

The one-size-fits-all approach in **SB 50 (Wiener)** fails to take into account the role that local governments' discretionary land use authority plays in ensuring that public safety is maintained.

Portions of Beverly Hills are in the “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone” and increased density in these and nearby areas has the potential to negatively impact evacuation efforts in the event of a wildfire. **SB 50 (Wiener)** does not provide any provide any protections for local governments that wish to limit overly dense development in areas that pose such a safety risk. The bill also fails to take into account the additional costs associated with expanding local emergency services to maintain the public’s safety and ensure these vital services are not negatively impacted due to the increase in population.

Additionally, these developments would inevitably be built in areas where the water and sewer systems were not designed to provide service for a more densely populated area. This would affect the public health and safety of our residents. It would also affect our ability to reliably provide adequate clean water and ensure the sanitary removal of human waste. The costs to update and expand these systems to meet the increased demands of a more dense development would cost local governments millions of dollars that many do not have and ultimately, this could lead to higher costs for water and sewer services so that cities and water districts can recover any investment in infrastructure assuming such rate increases are approved in accordance to Proposition 218.

Furthermore, **SB 50 (Wiener)** assumes that the tenants in these multi-family buildings would use public transit and forego owning a vehicle. By decreasing the parking requirement to .5 per unit, this would have the unintended consequence of forcing new residents to park on city streets. Many cities, including Beverly Hills, are currently dealing with the issue of overcrowded parking on city streets. In order to preserve parking for our residents, the City has created over 70 Preferential Parking Permit zones. Even with this in place, there is almost no additional street parking available should the density be increased in these areas.

While we appreciate the author’s efforts to address our concerns from **SB 827 (Weiner, 2017)**, the protections contained in this bill still falls far short of adequately protecting our most vulnerable residents.

The City of Beverly Hills has long supported the preservation of local control, as localities are best suited to address the needs of local constituents appropriately and effectively. This proposal overrides local discretionary land use authority and prevents municipalities like ours from best serving our communities. For these reasons, the City of Beverly Hills must strongly **OPPOSE** your **SB 50 (Wiener)**. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Julian A. Gold MD

Mayor, City of Beverly Hills

cc: Members and Consultants, Senate Housing Committee
The Honorable Ben Allen, 26th Senate District
The Honorable Richard Bloom, 50th Assembly District
Andrew K. Antwih, Shaw / Yoder / Antwih, Inc.