September 16, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Governor’s Office
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1851 (Wicks) Religious institution affiliated housing development projects: parking requirements
City of Beverly Hills – Request for Veto

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Beverly Hills, I write to you in respectful OPPOSITION to AB 1851 (Wicks) and respectfully request you VETO this bill when it comes before your desk. This bill would override local control and remove long-held land use authorities from local governments and provide parking concessions to religious institution affiliated housing developments without any requirement the development contain affordable housing units.

The City of Beverly Hills has long supported the preservation of local control, as localities are best suited to aptly address the needs of their local constituents. The City has put forth a great amount of time and effort to ensure the City’s growth is well-planned and takes the City’s future housing needs into account. For the State to address the housing affordability crisis, local governments must be allowed to lead the way and be given the ability to determine how best to address the crisis in their communities.

AB 1851 (Wicks) would allow a housing development project on religious institution-owned land to eliminate parking spaces without replacement and allows religious-use parking spaces to count towards local parking requirements for housing. This allowance does not require that some or all of the development be affordable. Furthermore, this bill would give religious institutions the ability to circumvent local parking requirements to construct developments that contain solely market rate housing, which would do nothing to address the State’s housing affordability crisis.

AB 1851 (Wicks) would exacerbate existing parking conflicts not only in Beverly Hills, but in many other cities throughout California, some of which have been brought on by the passage of several accessory dwelling unit bills. By eliminating parking spaces with no requirement to replace them, streets that are already at capacity for parking would be overwhelmed with demand. In order to preserve parking for our residents, the City has created over 70 Preferential Parking Permit zones over the course of many years. Even with this in place, there is almost no additional street parking available should the City not be able to require replacement parking.
For these reasons, the City of Beverly Hills must respectfully OPPOSE AB 1851 (Wicks). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lester J. Friedman
Mayor, City of Beverly Hills

cc: The Honorable Buffy Wicks, 15th Assembly District
The Honorable Ben Allen, 26th Senate District
The Honorable Richard Bloom, 50th Assembly District
Andrew K. Antwi, Shaw Yoder Antwi Schmelzer & Lange