August 8, 2019

The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
California State Assembly, 4th District
State Capitol, Room 5144
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: ACA 1 (Aguiar-Curry) Local government financing: affordable housing and public infrastructure: voter approval.
City of Beverly Hills – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry,

On behalf of the City of Beverly Hills, I write to you in SUPPORT of your ACA 1 which would place a measure on the November 2020 ballot. This important measure would lower the vote threshold to approve local general obligation (GO) bonds and certain special taxes for affordable housing, public infrastructure, and permanent supportive housing projects from a two-thirds supermajority to a 55 percent majority.

California is in the midst of a housing affordability crisis, which has exacerbated the state’s homelessness crisis. If California is to address these interconnected issues, the state will need to dramatically increase its stock of affordable housing. To effectively respond to the state’s housing affordability crisis, and increase the development of affordable housing, local governments need flexibility to provide critical infrastructure and more accessible forms of financing for these projects. The current two-thirds vote threshold required to enact certain special taxes and issue GO bonds often places these critical financing tools out of reach for many jurisdictions and hinders their ability to finance affordable housing and other critical infrastructure.

Lowering the vote threshold for GO bonds and some special taxes from a two-thirds majority to a 55 percent majority will make these financing mechanisms more obtainable for local governments. The 55 percent vote threshold is in-line with the threshold required for voters to approve school bonds and continues to ensure that new GO bonds and special taxes are enacted only with overwhelming support from the public.
While this measure would increase the ability of cities to pass special taxes and GO bonds, the City strongly supports the involvement of the state in assisting with financing important projects. Even with this lower threshold, cities may still be unable to issue GO bonds and therefore the state will continue to play a large role in helping fund local efforts to address the state’s housing affordability crisis.

ACA 1 will give local governments better access to a valuable tool to use in their efforts to build affordable housing and public infrastructure. For these reasons, the City of Beverly Hills is pleased to SUPPORT your ACA 1. Thank you for authoring this important measure.

Sincerely,

John A. Mirisch
Mayor, City of Beverly Hills

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