

# AB 1907 (Santiago, Gipson, Quirk-Silva) More Homeless Housing in California

## Bill Summary

AB 1907 would remove barriers to help accelerate the construction of desperately needed housing for families and individuals experiencing homelessness throughout California.

## Existing Law

Establishes the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the state's broadest environmental law used to protect the environment from adverse impacts that may result from construction projects (Public Resources Code Sections 21000-21178 and Title 14 CCR, Section 753, and Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387).

Exempts from the requirements of CEQA certain activities approved by the City of Los Angeles related to supportive housing and emergency shelters (Public Resources Code Section 21080.27).

## Background

In August 2019, the California Department of Housing and Community Development released their Regional Housing Needs Assessment citing a need for more than 1.3 million housing units built in southern California in the next decade.

In November 2019, the Los Angeles Times released polling results that showed that 95 percent of voters identified homelessness as a top concern. In fact, homelessness has rapidly increased throughout the state – including Los Angeles City by 16 percent, Sacramento County by 19 percent and San Francisco by 30 percent.

In an effort to address the lack of homeless housing, AB 1197 (Santiago) was passed in 2019 to speed up the environmental review process for emergency and supportive housing projects in the City of Los Angeles. In just two months of its enactment, Los Angeles City approved a 154-bed shelter in Venice, nine permanent supportive housing projects, and three homeless shelters.

It is estimated that AB 1197 will save between 12 and 18 months for many projects, resulting in about \$2 billion in savings over the next five years.

## Need for AB 1907

California is facing a housing and homelessness crisis that requires an urgent response. With a shortage of 1.4 million affordable homes in our state, there is a necessity to build more affordable housing, as well as emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing for the more than 150,000 people experiencing homelessness.

Although CEQA was originally designed to protect the environment, opponents of low-income and homeless housing projects too often wield it as a weapon to stall these projects. In recognizing the importance of this environmental law and the urgent need to get people off the streets and into housing, AB 1907 balances environmental and labor protections with the need to get affordable homes built more quickly.

Specifically, AB 1907 would exempt from CEQA emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing and certain affordable housing projects throughout California. Under this bill, all affordable housing projects would have to be 100 percent affordable and receive funding from either the state's Multifamily Housing Program or two federal programs (the HOME Investment Partnership Program and the Community Block Grant Program) – which already require rigorous review and labor protections. All projects would also have to be approved by local municipalities.

AB 1907 targets a narrow subset of homeless housing and affordable housing developments—the types of housing California's lowest-income households desperately need. This bill removes barriers to accelerate housing construction while ensuring we are protecting the environment, public health and the safety of our vulnerable communities.

## **Support**

---

California Housing Consortium (co-sponsor)  
California Housing Partnership (co-sponsor)  
Los Angeles Business Council (co-sponsor)  
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (co-sponsor)  
Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing (co-sponsor)  
Abundant Housing Los Angeles  
Bay Area Council  
California Apartment Association  
California Community Foundation  
Central City Association Los Angeles  
Century Housing  
Corporation of Supportive Housing  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles Mayor  
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce  
Los Angeles City Council  
Los Angeles County Business Federation  
Los Angeles Family Housing  
National Community Renaissance  
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce  
Orange County Business Council  
Related California  
San Bernardino County  
United Way of Greater Los Angeles  
Watts Investment Partners  
County of Santa Clara

## **Opposition**

---

None on file.

## **For More Information**

---

Marilyn Limon, Legislative Director  
Assembly Member Miguel Santiago  
916.319.2053 | [Marilyn.Limon@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Marilyn.Limon@asm.ca.gov)