



April 20, 2022

The Honorable Buffy Wicks  
California State Assembly  
1021 O St, Ste. 4240  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2011 (Wicks) The Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act – SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

As California's leading affordable housing advocacy organizations, we write in strong support of AB 2011, the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act, which will expand climate-friendly infill affordable housing opportunities for struggling families, seniors, workers, and veterans – while also growing a thriving, well-paid, middle-class construction workforce.

The pandemic has shown us all the essential role affordable housing plays in every California community — providing shelter, support, and community to some of the state's most vulnerable populations, from seniors and veterans to teachers, firefighters, and many other hard-working families. California currently has a shortage of over one million homes affordable to lower-income households and on any given night, roughly 160,000 people in California experience homelessness. The Legislature and Newsom Administration have demonstrated their commitment to addressing the housing crisis in recent years, but there is still work to do to find new sites for affordable housing, accelerate production, and increase well-paying, high road construction jobs in every community.

AB 2011 will do just that. It pairs the ability to build housing by right on underutilized commercial sites with strong labor standards that ensure all construction workers earn prevailing wages and receive health benefits. By opening new sites to housing, AB 2011 would rapidly accelerate housing production at all income levels – particularly for lower income Californians. Because the development would occur in areas zoned for commercial use, the bill will preserve the density or character of existing residential neighborhoods. These sites would be required to be in infill locations, helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet our climate goals.

In order to build on these new sites, the bill requires developers meet a range of responsible wage and training standards. Prevailing wage is required on all projects. And, for projects of 50 or more units, contractors must either participate in a state-approved apprenticeship program or request the dispatch of apprentices from a program and provide health benefits for their workers. If no apprentice workers are available, the project can still move forward. The bill also includes new enforcement mechanisms to ensure these payroll and benefits requirements are being met.

AB 2011 strikes the right balance, giving builders access to new sites for housing development, while also providing high wages and health care benefits to the construction workforce we need.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ray Pearl  
California Housing Consortium

Chris Martin  
Housing California

Matt Schwartz  
California Housing Partnership

Rob Wiener  
California Coalition for Rural Housing

Amie Fishman  
Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern  
California

Alan Greenlee  
Southern California Association of NonProfit  
Housing