



April 21, 2017

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2059
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT SB 167 (Skinner)

Dear Senator Skinner:

The California Housing Consortium (CHC) is pleased to support your bill SB 167, which will help ensure that local governments approve the projects necessary to meet the housing needs of the jurisdiction.

CHC is a non-partisan advocate for the production and preservation of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income Californians. We represent the development, building, financial, and public sectors united in their goal that every Californian has a safe, affordable place to call home.

California families are facing a harder time finding a place to live than at any point in our history. California's broken and backward housing policies have contributed to the worsening crisis:

- A decade of disinvestment has starved local communities of the seed dollars they need to bring affordable homes to struggling neighborhoods. A new report from the state's own Department of Housing and Community Development finds "unstable funding for affordable-home development is impeding our ability to meet California's housing needs, particularly for lower-income households."
- California spends \$300 million in tax dollars every year to subsidize purchases of second homes for some Californians when millions more struggle to have a roof over their head at all.
- Existing laws that require local governments to plan to accommodate jobs and growth haven't resulted in the promised affordable development.

The Housing Accountability Act (HAA) puts limits on a local government's ability to: (1) reject proposed housing development projects; (2) condition approval in a manner that renders the project infeasible for affordable development; or (3) reduce the density of any project that comports with the existing general plan and zoning laws. Just as with the Housing Element Law,

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HAA provides for a judicial remedy that allows a court to issue an order to compel a city to take action on the development project. SB 167 strengthens the HAA and will help ensure that local governments approve the projects necessary to meet the housing needs of the jurisdiction.

SB 167 comes at a crucial time for California, when state housing investment has plummeted by 69% in the last decade, worsening the unprecedented housing affordability crisis in our state. Today, more than 1.7 million Californians are paying more than half their income in rent – leaving too few dollars for nutrition, medicine, transportation, and other fundamentals.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue and your ongoing commitment to ensuring the availability of housing affordable to all Californians. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact our Policy Director, Marina Wiant, at (916) 272-2325 or mwiant@calhsng.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Pearl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ray Pearl
Executive Director

CC: Senate Committee on Judiciary