[Insert Date]

The Honorable David Alvarez

California State Assembly

1021 N Street, Suite 8630

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1449 (Alvarez) Affordable Housing CEQA Exemption – SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Alvarez,

On behalf of [Organization Name], we write in support of Assembly Bill 1449, your bill to facilitate the development of affordable housing by exempting from CEQA certain 100% affordable housing projects throughout California.

Include 1-2 sentences to briefly describe your organization

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 gap of 1.2 million homes affordable to lower-income households and on any given night, roughly 160,000 people in California experience homelessness. While the state has taken significant steps in recent years to address the housing and homelessness crises, there is much more to be done to make housing more accessible and affordable to lower-income Californians in every community.

Despite the well-established need, affordable and supportive housing projects face vocal opposition across the state, making these projects more difficult to site, more time-consuming to approve, and more costly to build. Current law provides numerous protections for proposed affordable and supportive housing developments seeking local approval, including many by right approvals or CEQA exemptions for certain affordable housing projects.

Unfortunately, the existing tools have many limitations and prevent access to CEQA streamlining for many 100% affordable housing developments. These developments are critical to helping the state reach its climate goals and to affirmatively further fair housing. By its nature and as a result of state and local funding priorities, affordable housing is higher density and built on location efficient sites close to services and amenities its residents need. The funding programs also prioritize housing in high resource areas, which have been shown by research to support positive economic, educational, and health outcomes to low-income families, particularly for families with children.

Please include any project examples you might have here.

AB 1449 would exempt from CEQA 100% affordable housing projects that meet rigorous labor standards and comply with specified environmental requirements. This bill balances the need of California’s two most pressing issues in housing and homelessness with the environmental and labor concerns to ensure more affordable homes are built quickly for those most in need.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

[Insert Your Full Name]

[Insert Your Title]

[Insert Your Organization’s Name]