



June 12, 2024

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
Chair, California Senate Housing Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8630
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support AB 1893

Dear Chair Skinner and members of the committee:

On behalf of Chamber of Progress, a tech industry coalition committed to promoting technology's progressive future, I write in support of **AB 1893**, which will eliminate barriers to building affordable housing in the state. By updating the "Builder's Remedy," this bill will allow developers of affordable and mixed-income housing to bypass local logjams to build more housing units.

California's housing shortage is one of the worst in the nation. In order to keep up with demand, the state needs to add an estimated 180,000 units of new housing every year.¹ Unfortunately, California has not been able to meet even half of that goal for the last ten years.² The result is skyrocketing housing costs, homelessness, and inequality. More than half of renters in the state, and more than 40% of homeowners, are housing cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.³ The burden of high housing costs is not equally distributed—a "sizeable majority" of women living in rented homes are rent-burdened,⁴ and homeownership has become increasingly out of reach for Black and Hispanic Californians.⁵

The housing shortage is largely driven by local restrictions impeding new construction. Despite having an abundance of local capacity and a desperate

¹ <https://calmatters.org/commentary/2024/04/california-politicians-skirmish-housing-crisis/>

² <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-and-research/addressing-variety-housing-challenges>

³ <https://www.ppic.org/interactive/californians-and-the-housing-crisis/>

⁴ <https://www.ppic.org/interactive/californians-and-the-housing-crisis/>

⁵ <https://www.car.org/aboutus/mediacenter/newsreleases/2024-News-Releases/2023haibyethnicity>

need for the development of housing, every coastal jurisdiction failed to meet their housing production goals assigned to them by Regional Housing Needs Assessments (RHNA) for over 20 years while their populations continued to grow.⁶ According to a 2015 Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) report on housing, the primary reason that California did not build enough housing, and thus suffers from an unprecedented housing affordability crisis presently, is because regional approval processes were stymied by local opposition, oftentimes referred to as NIMBYism.⁷

AB 1893 will limit the ability of local governments to deny affordable and mixed-income housing projects. In cities that have failed to adopt a compliant housing element under the Housing Accountability Act, the so-called “Builder’s Remedy” limits local governments’ ability to deny or restrict development of affordable and mixed-income housing. By expanding the definition of “housing for lower income households” and providing better, objective standards for development, the bill will make more housing projects eligible for builder’s remedy applications and streamline the approval process for those applications. The bill would also incentivize construction of smaller, “missing middle” housing units by exempting projects with 10 units or fewer from affordability requirements. In sum, the bill will lower financial and regulatory barriers to the construction of new, affordable housing in the state.

California has consistently failed to address the shortage of housing units. Particularly given the overall increase in the cost of living, it is imperative to address one of the largest costs facing California families. By incentivizing the construction of new, affordable housing units and streamlining the process for developers to bypass recalcitrant local governments, AB 1893 will help ease the pressure on housing prices. We urge you to support this bill.

Sincerely,



Robert Singleton,
Director of Policy & Public Affairs for California

⁶ <https://abag.ca.gov/our-work/housing/rhna-regional-housing-needs-allocation>

⁷ <https://lao.ca.gov/Videos/Player?playlistId=20&videoid=138>