



April 22, 2022

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

Re: Support for AB 2011 (Wicks): The Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

On behalf of the Council of Infill Builders, a statewide organization of real estate professionals committed to improving California through infill development, I write to support AB 2011, the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act. AB 2011 will expand affordable housing opportunities in prime infill locations for low-income Californians, while boosting well-paid, middle-class construction jobs.

The Council of Infill Builders is dedicated to championing policies that make high-quality, transit-oriented infill development easier, cheaper and faster to build. To make this development equitable, vibrant and humane, the state will need to dramatically boost affordable housing in infill locations. The 2022 Statewide Housing Plan estimated that California needs to build approximately 2.5 million housing units over the next eight years, including over one million affordable units. Yet according to the California Department of Housing and Community Development, the state averages less than 100,000 new units per year and has never produced more than 20,000 new affordable homes in any year, despite needing 180,000 additional units annually to meet existing demand, including 80,000 affordable units.

AB 2011 will address the challenge by pairing the ability to build housing by right on underutilized infill commercial sites with strong labor standards, which will ensure all construction workers earn prevailing wages and receive health benefits. By opening new infill sites to housing, AB 2011 would rapidly accelerate well-placed 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 ensure that this housing occurs in infill locations, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Furthermore, the bill will boost well-paying construction jobs. In order to build on these new sites, developers would need to meet a range of responsible wage and training standards, including prevailing wage 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 requirements are met.

The Council of Infill Builders thanks you for your leadership on this critical need and is proud to support.

Sincerely,

Meea Kang
Council of Infill Builders