



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

455 NORTH REXFORD DRIVE ▪ BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA 90210

Robert Wunderlich, Mayor

June 7, 2021

The Honorable Toni Atkins
President Pro Tempore
California State Senate, 39th District
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 9 (Atkins) Housing development: approvals.
City of Beverly Hills – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Atkins,

On behalf of the City of Beverly Hills, I write to inform you of our respectful OPPOSITION to your SB 9 as amended on April 27, 2021. This bill would require localities to provide ministerial permits for duplex projects located on parcels zoned for single-family housing, or the subdivision of a parcel zoned for residential use into two equal parcels.

The City of Beverly Hills has put forth a great amount of time and effort into ensuring that the City's growth is well-planned and takes the City's future housing needs into account. The City strongly believes in the preservation of local control over zoning as localities are best suited to aptly address the needs of local constituents.

SB 9 would eliminate single-family zoning by requiring the ministerial approval of duplexes and parcel splits in these areas, even if local officials and residents object. We are concerned that over time, this bill would cause the supply of single-family homes to diminish due to conversions to duplexes. This would negatively impact prices for the rest of the state's single-family dwellings which would make it more difficult for residents to attain their own home. Additionally, this bill would override local land use plans and regulations and eviscerate decades of careful planning.

The one-size-fits-all approach in SB 9 fails to take into account the role that local governments' discretionary land use authority plays in ensuring public safety. Portions of Beverly Hills are in the

“Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone” and increased density in these and nearby areas has the potential to negatively impact evacuation efforts in the event of a wildfire. SB 9 does not provide any protections for local governments that wish to limit overly dense development in areas that pose such a safety risk. The bill also fails to take into account the additional costs associated with expanding local emergency services to maintain the public’s safety and ensure these vital services are not negatively impacted due to the increase in population.

We understand SB 9 is part of a package of housing bills introduced by several members of the Senate Democratic Caucus on December 7, 2020. This group of bills is known as the Building Housing Opportunities For All Senate Housing Package-- According to the Senate Democratic Caucus, these bills are intended to empower homeowners who want to help solve the crisis, and “provide more land-use tools and flexibility to meet the needs of local governments and community partners, and streamlines procedural hurdles.”

SB 9 contains provisions that are identical to your legislation from last year, SB 1120, which failed to secure final approval before adjournment of the 2019-2020 Regular Session. The City of Beverly Hills adopted a formal position in opposition to SB 1120 (Atkins).

The City of Beverly Hills has long supported the preservation of local control, as localities are best suited to aptly address the needs of local constituents, which this bill would further erode. This proposal overrides local discretionary land use authority and prevents municipalities like ours from best serving our communities. For these reasons, the City of Beverly Hills must respectfully OPPOSE your SB 9 as amended on April 27, 2021. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert Wunderlich
Mayor, City of Beverly Hills

Cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Local Government Committee
Members and Consultants, Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee
The Honorable Ben Allen, 26th Senate District
The Honorable Richard Bloom, 50th Assembly District
Andrew K. Antwih, Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange