



May 16, 2025

The Honorable Anna Caballero  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Support for SB 484 (Laird)**

Dear Chair Caballero,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are pleased to support SB 484, authored by Senator John Laird. We respectfully encourage your committee to approve and advance this important legislation.

Between enactment of the California Coastal Act in 1977 and 1981, the California Coastal Commission's permitting decisions required the construction of thousands of units of affordable housing in the coastal zone and prevented the demolition of thousands more. Unfortunately, after enactment of the so-called Mello Act in 1981, which eliminated the Coastal Commission's authority related to affordable housing, development of affordable housing in the coastal zone dropped precipitously as developers and local governments were given free rein to pursue only the most lucrative projects.

Today, California's coastal zone is left with a severe imbalance in the types of housing available that afflicts coastal communities statewide, and the lack of affordable housing in the coastal zone contributes to our state's social and environmental crises of housing accessibility, transportation gridlock and pollution, and inland sprawl. We agree with our partners in the affordable housing sector that the coastal zone needs a substantial increase in affordable housing. At the same time, as dedicated advocates for California's coastal environment and the public's legal rights to access and enjoy the coast, we remain vigilant against policy proposals that would undermine the Coastal Act by serving the wealthiest while eroding California's hard-won protections for the

marine environment, equitable public access, environmental justice, and sea level rise preparedness.

By leveraging the Coastal Act's existing categorical exclusion mechanism over a ten-year period, SB 484 creates a valuable new expedited pathway to advance the multi-unit, 100 percent affordable housing projects that are so badly needed within the urbanized areas of California's coastal cities, especially those showing the least progress in achieving their quotas for affordable housing under the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. The lessons learned from implementation of SB 484 will inform future policymaking, such as updates to Local Coastal Programs, which could further facilitate affordable housing development.

Accordingly, we support SB 484, because it takes an innovative and responsible step to streamline and increase affordable housing development in the coastal zone without needlessly undermining California's unique public trust coastal resources.

We appreciate Senator Laird's bold efforts to bridge the strong opinions on the issue of coastal zone housing policy with a proposal for reform that promises real progress, while preserving the policies that have made the California coast our state's most beloved and economically valuable natural feature.

We urge your support for SB 484.

Sincerely,

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