



May 6, 2020

The Honorable Laura Friedman
Chair, Natural Resources Committee
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, California 95814

SUBJECT: AB 1907 (Santiago) - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Friedman,

On behalf of the above business organizations in the Inland Empire, we write in support of AB 1907 which would, until January 1, 2029, exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) certain projects that provide emergency shelters, supportive housing, or affordable housing that are carried out by a public agency. Our support for AB 1907 is influenced by the need to facilitate the construction, reduce the costs, and overall remove unnecessary restrictions from the creation of affordable and vital housing.

In 2019, the California legislature passed AB 1197 (Santiago), which streamlined the construction of emergency homeless shelters and supportive housing in the City and County of Los Angeles by exempting these projects from CEQA. AB 1907 would go further to address our homelessness and housing crisis by exempting all low-income affordable housing projects (those affordable to households earning 80 percent or below the Area Median Income) and shelters from CEQA, and extending these provisions to the entire State of California.

California is facing a substantial housing shortage, which has led to the state having some of the most expensive housing in the United States and the world. This housing shortage is the result of several decades of limiting where housing can be built and how much housing can be built in cities across the state, driven by anti-growth coalitions and politicians. Although it is intended to be a disclosure tool to

inform the public review process for development projects, CEQA has been a key tool that has been used by opposition groups to delay and stop housing and homeless shelter projects.

AB 1907 will facilitate the construction of vital housing projects by removing a tool that has been abused by groups that simply do not like these projects in their neighborhoods. Absent this bill, emergency shelters, supportive housing, or affordable housing projects will continue to be stalled. The shortage of affordable housing will continue to grow and exacerbate the economic divide in our state.

Assemblymember Santiago estimates that AB 1197 will save between a year and eighteen months on housing project timelines, which could result in a \$2 billion savings through 2025. AB 1907 can expand that benefit statewide. Many other communities are equally impacted by the housing challenges that Los Angeles County experience and should be able to receive the same type of relief.

For these reasons, among others, we urge your support AB 1907. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our position in greater detail, please contact Luis Portillo at 909-944-2201 or by email at lportillo@ieep.com. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Zeb Welborn Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce	Bobby Spiegel Corona Chamber of Commerce	Gloria Martinez Fontana Chamber of Commerce
Joshua Bonner Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce	Peggi Hazlett Greater Ontario Business Council	Shannon Shannon Hesperia Chamber of Commerce
Paul Granillo Inland Empire Economic Partnership	Oscar Valdepeña Moreno Valley Chamber of Commerce	Patrick Ellis Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce
Robert Hufnagel Rancho Cucamonga Chamber of Commerce	John Mills Redlands Chamber of Commerce	Dori Jared-Ferranto Upland Chamber of Commerce
Mark Creffield Victor Valley Chamber of Commerce		

Cc: Assembly Member Miguel Santiago