San Diego Community Planners Committee

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July 9, 2025

To:

Assembly Local Government Committee Chair, The Honorable Cecelia Aguiar-Curry

San Diego County Assembly State Members
District 74 – The Honorable Laurie Davies
District 75 – The Honorable Carl DeMaio
District 76 – The Honorable Dr. Darshana R. Patel
District 77 – The Honorable Tasha Boerner
District 78 – The Honorable Christopher Ward
District 79 – The Honorable Dr. LaShae Sharp-Collins
District 80 – The Honorable David Alvarez

Subject: Opposition to SB 79 – Request to Vote NO

Dear Assembly Members,

The Community Planners Committee (CPC), representing 41 Community Planning groups throughout the City of San Diego, urges you to vote **NO** on Senate Bill 79 (Weiner) (hereafter, SB 79). As the elected community voices for the city, we urge you to consider what is appropriate for San Diego and your constituents. While Senator Scott Weiner's Fact Sheet – Updated 7.7.25 states the City of San Diego supports SB 79, neither the mayor nor the city council have explicitly endorsed SB 79. In fact, San Diego's Legislative Platform not only emphasizes support of land use regulations that would be eliminated by SB 79, it supports retaining local control over state and federal regulations in general. Any statement of implied or explicit support for SB 79 runs counter to these principles. As explained more fully below, there is good reason to reject SB 79 in its entirety.

Our opposition is grounded in the sweeping nature of SB 79 that fails to fully contemplate the diversity of California's geography, topography, infrastructure, and planning needs. Although, SB 79 proposes a fixed, tiered approach and a "local transit-oriented development alternative plan" provision, presumably to address this reality of diversity, it fails. These mechanisms for density embedded in SB 79 are deeply misaligned with the characteristics and needs of cities such as San Diego.

As drafted by Senator Wiener, the sole representative for the combined City and County of San Francisco, SB 79 may address the challenges of his jurisdiction. However, unlike San Francisco, our city historically grew through a mix of urban, suburban, and even rural development. Indeed, while San Diego has vertically grown in places chosen for this specific kind of development, like Downtown, University Town Center, and more recently, Mission Valley and Little Italy, many neighborhoods are best served by development scale appropriate to their suburban settings and infrastructure capacity. This recently came to light in the wake of San Diego's Bonus ADU program which proved to be an unmitigated disaster of unbalanced development.[1] Following much needed reform, City Planning Director Heidi Vonblum stated, "Our goal is to ensure public safety and allow for development at scale

with the surrounding neighborhoods while continuing to create affordable homes for San Diegans of all incomes, particularly in the City's high-resource areas." [2]

More importantly, *San Diego is already meeting its state-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).* Through recent community plan updates, San Diego has nearly tripled its capacity for more housing without resorting to an over-reaching development mandate like SB 79. As community plans continue to be updated, capacity will only continue to increase.

SB79 would mandate **rigid development standards** that fail to account for:

- Community context
- Local topography
- Infrastructure limitations
- Quality of architectural design

The measure **disregards fundamental land use planning principles**, including:

- Appropriate building height transitions
- Thoughtful street-level relationships between buildings and streets
- Harmonious integration with surrounding neighborhoods

We fully recognize that housing challenges persist at the state and local levels. Unlike SB 79, good planning that addresses these challenges requires more than imposing concentrated development within broad, predetermined circles near transit lines. In other words, mass transit should support thoughtfully designed communities rather than artificially inflate density. Let the San Francisco Bay Area pursue its planning strategies locally, without imposing statewide mandates that significantly diminish the ability of other jurisdictions to govern responsibly and effectively.

We implore you to represent the distinct needs of San Diego—and all of California's varied communities—by voting **NO** on SB79.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Victoria LaBruzzo

Victoria LaBruzzo, Chair
Community Planners Committee
City of San Diego

1. https://www.10news.com/news/local-news/city-council-votes-to-make-changes-to-san-diegos-adu-program
2. https://www.insidesandiego.org/city-council-adopts-reforms-accessory-dwelling-unit-program

cc: District 18 – The Honorable Steve Padilla
District 38 – The Honorable Catherine Blakespear
District 39 – The Honorable Akilah Weber Pierson
District 40 – The Honorable Brian Jones
San Diego Mayor – The Honorable Todd Gloria
SD City Council District 1 – The Honorable Joe LaCava
SD City Council District 2 – The Honorable Jennifer Campbell
SD City Council District 3 – The Honorable Stephen Whitburn
SD City Council District 4 – The Honorable Henry Foster III
SD City Council District 5 – The Honorable Marni von Wilpert
SD City Council District 6 – The Honorable Ken Lee
SD City Council District 7 – The Honorable Raul Campillo
SD City Council District 8 – The Honorable Vivian Moreno
SD City Council District 9 – The Honorable Sean Elo-Rivera