



Peninsula Community Planning Board
1220 Rosecrans Street PMB 549
San Diego, CA 92106

September 17, 2026

Re: **Senate Bill 344 (Weber Pierson) As Enrolled – Request for Veto**

Dear Governor Newsom:

We urge you to **VETO** Senate Bill 344. This gut-and-amend bill, authored by Senator Akila Weber Pierson and sponsored by Mayor Todd Gloria, previously dealt with dispersing funeral remains at sea and was completely amended during the final four days of the legislative session to grant the Midway Rising mega-development in San Diego a blanket exemption from further review or lawsuits under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Together with its sister bill SB958, by the same author, SB344 carves out CEQA exemptions for Midway Rising and establishes a terrible precedent whereby wealthy, well-connected developers get special-preference legislation exempting their projects, such as data centers or mega-developments, from CEQA review. The Midway Rising mega-project is promoted by developers Stan Kroenke, owner of the Los Angeles Rams; housing developers Zephyr and Chelsea Investment Corp.; and sports-and-entertainment operator Legends. By using an inactive file, the author skirted the bill through the Legislature on consent files, gutted and completely amended it on August 27, and passed it in the dead of night on August 30. This precluded the public from being able to provide comment and prevented the Legislature from completing a proper, thoughtful review of the bill. This subterfuge resulted in the bill having no noted opposition, even though impacted communities have major concerns regarding the project.

Midway Rising has many unmitigated environmental impacts, including traffic congestion, flooding potential, critical water-table issues, liquefaction risks, and inadequate roads and utilities to support a project of this magnitude at that site. The project consists of 4,254 dwelling units (2,254 market-rate and 2,000 deed-restricted 80% AMI units), 130,000 square feet of commercial space, and a 16,000-seat arena. The project's EIR fails to factor in that, within one-half mile, on the nearby NAVWAR site, an additional 10,000 housing units and more commercial space are proposed. The two projects would overwhelm the area's infrastructure with minimal mitigation measures. This lack of integrated impact analysis was precisely why the EIR was invalidated by the Fourth District Court of Appeal, and why the override that SB344 affords is critically concerning.

SB344 and its sister bill (SB958) both have substantial opposition from the local community. SB958 is opposed by the San Diego Community Planners Committee and the Peninsula Community Planning Board. Neither group had time during the four-day window in which SB344 was legislated to take a position. SB344 represents an egregious and corrupt attempt to override CEQA, blunt strong local opposition, obfuscate legislative review, and override an adverse court decision to give this project a "get out of jail free card" from further CEQA review or lawsuits.

We therefore strongly urge your veto of SB344 to save CEQA and the San Diego community.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair, Peninsula Community Planning Board

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