



Peninsula Community Planning Board
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September 17, 2026

Re: Senate Bill 958 (Weber Pierson) As Enrolled – Request Bill Veto

Dear Governor Newsom:

We urge your **VETO** of Senate Bill 958 when it comes up for your signature. This bill, authored by Senator Akila Weber Pierson, and sponsored by Mayor Todd Gloria, was previously sold to the legislature and public as a district-only bill for a California Environmental Act (CEQA) carve out that applied only to the Midway Rising megadevelopment. It specified that building height would not be an adverse impact that required review and mitigation under CEQA. However, this bill was amended on August 19th in the dead of night to expand the CEQA carve out to projects throughout California, not just Midway Rising, and allows developers to exploit the building height exemption.

This bill, along with its sister bill – SB344 by the same author and sponsor – carves out CEQA building height exemptions for Midway Rising and other projects and establishes a very bad precedent whereby wealthy developers can get their tall multistory building projects exempted from CEQA review by eviscerating the California Environmental Quality Act through special interest legislation such as SB958. This will turn San Diego and other cities throughout California into Miami Beaches by allowing high rise developments to obstruct public access and scenic coastal views that CEQA preserves.

The Midway Rising mega-project is in San Diego City and promoted by four developers. It covers 49 acres of City-owned land at the San Diego Sports Arena site and is envisioned to include a 16,000-seat sports arena, 14 acres of parks and public space; a mixed-use entertainment, arts, and cultural district; and 4,250 housing units, 2,000 of which are promoted as “affordable housing”. The developers sold this project to the public as providing “affordable housing,” but they are not affordable by seniors and low-income households since they are to be deed-restricted to 80% area mean income (AMI), which makes them nearly market-rate. The developers and Mayor Gloria turned to SB958 to overturn two adverse court rulings which invalidated two environmental impact reports and their related ballot initiatives, so the developers and Mayor could ram through the CEQA review without being forced to mitigate the adverse building height environment impacts. If built, the project would be the largest “not affordable” affordable housing project in the western United States.

The author and developers expanded the impact of the bill beyond Midway Rising by amending it on August 19 to exempt building height from CEQA height review to projects throughout California, thereby skirting legislative and community review prior to the amendment. This subterfuge resulted in it having 24 Assemblymembers either voting No or Not Voting (effectively a No Vote) on the August 19th amended bill.

Midway Rising has many unmitigated environment impacts in addition to building height such as major traffic congestion, density, flooding, critical water table issues, liquefaction risks, and lack of adequate roads and utilities. Its 2,000 units of so called “affordable housing” are not needed because they are not affordable. It is being developed in parallel with 10,000 or more additional housing units at the

nearby NAVWAR project, which will overwhelm the infrastructure of the area including roads, water, and sewer services.

SB958 has substantial opposition from the local community. SB958 is opposed by the San Diego Community Planners Committee and Peninsula Community Planning Board which represents the community on local development issues. It therefore represents an egregious and corrupt attempt to override CEQA, strong local opposition, legislative review, and an adverse court decision to give this project and other high-rise projects throughout California a pass from CEQA review and to turn California coastal cities into new Miami Beaches to the detriment of residents, communities, and the environment.

We therefore strongly urge your veto of SB958 to save CEQA, the San Diego Community, and cities throughout California from this bad bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Law
Chair, Peninsula Community Planning Board