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Mayor

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**RE: CITY OF REDONDO BEACH OPPOSES HOUSING BILLS THAT PREEMPT
LOCAL REGULATORY CONTROLS**

Dear State Senate and Assembly Members:

There are several bills that have been introduced in the Senate and Assembly this year related to housing and affordable housing. Although the City of Redondo Beach understands the intent to address the shortage of housing and affordable housing in the State of California, there are concerns with the potential consequences of many of these bills. The list of applicable bills is as follows:

- SB 902 Planning and zoning: housing development: density
- SB 995 Environmental quality: Jobs and Economic Improvement Through Environmental Leadership Act of 2011: housing projects
- SB 1085 Density Bonus Law: qualifications for incentives or concessions: student housing for lower income students: moderate-income persons and families: local government constraints
- SB 1120 Subdivisions: tentative maps
- SB 1299 Housing development: incentives: rezoning of idle retail sites
- AB 725 General Plans: housing element: moderate-income and above moderate-income housing: suburban and metropolitan jurisdictions
- AB 1279 Planning and zoning: housing development: high-opportunity areas
- AB 2345 Planning and zoning: density bonuses: annual report: affordable housing
- AB 3040 Local planning: regional housing needs assessment
- AB 3107 Planning and zoning: general plan: housing development

Local Controls and Planning

Existing State law leaves zoning decisions exclusively to local governments—this is a major part of the home rule doctrine. Several of the housing bills proposed in the Senate and Assembly preempt local regulation for housing.

Our City is currently updating its General Plan to address many local housing related concerns. Since spring 2017, a 27-member citizens General Plan Advisory Committee has conducted 21 meetings, with 6 more scheduled, many where the focus has been on housing in Redondo Beach. The intent is to ensure that a broad range of housing

types and densities are available. However, under numerous proposed housing bills this year, these robust planning efforts specific to our City would not be taken into consideration.

Redondo Beach provides for a broad range of housing types and densities. The City has also taken action to zone for higher densities around high quality transit nodes and to some extent along transit corridors. The City's certified Housing Element identifies specific sites in strategic locations and includes specific programs for ensuring housing goals as required are achieved. Every area identified in the Housing Element has distinct challenges that require different approaches.

Redondo Beach is a perfect example of a medium size coastal city striving to meet and address the housing needs of Southern California. We have every level and type of housing; singles, 1 bedroom, 2 bedrooms, 3 bedrooms, multi-family housing, single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, and multi-million-dollar coastal homes. Fifty percent of the housing units in the community is rental. We also have a Housing Authority with over 500 vouchers issued for Section 8 housing. We have numerous senior living complexes in all areas of town.

Like many communities in California, Redondo Beach is largely 'built-out' with worsening traffic, impacted schools, and water shortages. However, Redondo Beach's population continues to grow, along with average household size and the number of households. We have been averaging an additional 60 units per year for the last 15 years.

Redondo Beach's population density is 11,000 residents per square mile. Our city is one of the most densely populated areas in California. Demographia.com rated Redondo Beach as 43rd in population density for U.S. Cities over 50,000 people after the 2000 census. With this population density, the City as a result has 11 Level of Service 'F' intersections and similar parking challenges. Nonetheless, the City of Redondo Beach is producing a wide variety of housing after carefully considering the suitability and impacts of each housing project.

Many of the outlying cities in the LA area such as ours have a severe housing/jobs imbalance where over 90% of the residents leave their town in the morning to go to work (recognizing that during the LA County Safer at Home Order addressing the public health emergency related to COVID-19 and the curfews implemented recently this has been temporarily suspended but will return once orders are lifted). This creates huge impacts to our transportation sectors in one direction in the morning, to only reverse that impact during the evening commute. What these areas need is more job creating business centers to reverse some of that flow, not more housing that will only worsen the problem.

Yet, again, many of the proposed housing and affordable housing bills would exempt projects from local controls to appropriately plan, regulate, and provide infrastructure for housing in our community based on the community's needs and circumstances.

One Size Does Not Fit All

Despite the city's contemporary land-use planning policies and zoning designations, the proposed legislation would replace our strategically planned, locally appropriate areas of housing intensification with a blanket policy. This one size fits all approach to local land use regulation would have significant adverse impacts on our established community and its character, many bills having significant implications regarding traffic, parking, and other infrastructure that was designed decades ago for a suburban density.

Land use decisions by communities and local officials are complex and take into account many different issues such as school capacity, financial sustainability, available park space, traffic, air pollution, water needs, sewer capacity, parking, affordability, street maintenance, commercial needs, industrial needs, access to emergency services, etc.

A one size fits all approach dictated from the State will be a disaster for many communities by exacerbating impacts that will also have consequences with State-wide interest. Water needs will increase and student/teacher ratios will deteriorate just to name two. Legislation that creates even bigger problems with State-wide interests will demand more rules and regulations to fix the problems they create.

State legislation should not interfere with complex decisions best handled at the local level. Local land-use decisions should be left to local communities who must manage and maintain the towns they create. To address this concern, on July 7, 2020 the Redondo Beach City Council received a report and authorized this response to the housing bills listed above that propose significant detrimental impacts on local control.

In conclusion, although it is important to make housing development a priority in today's climate, housing development regulations and approvals should be left to the local agencies that are best equipped to evaluate the impacts of projects, and can require mitigations to protect the health and safety of the residents they serve. We oppose home rule preemption.

Sincerely,



William Brand

CC: Senator Benjamin Allen, 26th State Senate District
Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi, 66th Assembly District
Michael J. Arnold, Michael J. Arnold & Associates
City Council Members, City of Redondo Beach