

July 10, 2025

Assemblymember Catherine Stefani
State Capitol, Room 2141
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: OPPOSE SB 79 (Wiener) – A Massive Overreach That Promotes Demolition, Displacement, and Developer Profits

Dear Assemblymember Stefani,

On behalf of Neighborhoods United SF (NUSF) — a coalition of over 50 neighborhood associations, tenant groups, historic preservation organizations, affordable housing and small business advocates across San Francisco — we strongly urge you to **oppose Senate Bill 79 (Wiener)**.

Your long-standing leadership on neighborhood safety, fiscal responsibility, and preserving San Francisco's livability has earned respect among your constituents. SB 79 represents the opposite approach — a rushed, top-down land-use policy that strips cities of the very tools they need to plan for responsible growth. It threatens the identity and fabric of the communities you represent and undermines the local input and environmental protections your office has consistently championed.

Despite its title, *The Abundant and Affordable Homes Near Transit Act*, SB 79 contains no affordability requirements. Instead, it offers a massive windfall to developers of luxury housing — removing existing incentives for low-income homes and overriding city plans with by-right 7-story (or higher) towers across your entire district. SB 79 would force drastic zoning changes that ignore planning context, neighborhood scale, and the very infrastructure limits your constituents deal with daily.

Our specific concerns include:

- **It Blankets the City.** In a dense, transit-rich city like San Francisco, SB 79 would effectively upzone almost every neighborhood — including single-family districts, small mixed-use corridors, and working-class areas — by applying ½-mile or even ¼-mile zone radius around bus stops and train stations. That means 7-story towers by-right in neighborhoods that were never planned for them. It also sets the stage at a later date, state density bonuses are added to this base height to triple the size of the 7-story limit.

- **It Incentivizes Demolition and Displacement.** The bill opens the door to demolishing and replacing existing rent-controlled housing, legacy small businesses, and historic buildings with unaffordable high-rises, with no tenant protections, affordability guarantees, or environmental review. This bill is an end-around that undermines rent control and will encourage the demolition of rent-controlled units in San Francisco for market-rate, unaffordable units.
- **It Turns Transit into a Threat.** SB 79 makes transit a target of community opposition by tying aggressive upzoning to bus stops and train stations. The bill undercuts the very ridership it claims to support by prioritizing high-income tenants least likely to use transit. It will encourage cities to eliminate public transit stops and routes to avoid zoning changes. Again, this bill does the opposite of what it sets out to accomplish.
- **It Overrides San Francisco's Certified Housing Element,** which was developed under state mandates and millions of dollars in city planning resources. It contradicts the Housing Element, which already identifies where new housing can go, often along transit and commercial corridors. SB 79 overrides that work and imposes one-size-fits-all upzoning without context or local control.
- **It is an Unfunded Mandate.** It does not include provisions for the infrastructure, schools, emergency services, or public transit upgrades required to support such dramatic density increases. It also fails to address sustainability, tree canopy, or the carbon cost of demolition and new construction. Even the Los Angeles City Attorney has flagged serious constitutional concerns.
- **It is a Developer Giveaway, Not a Housing Strategy.** California desperately needs affordable homes — not just more units. SB 79 rewards speculative developers while failing to provide any real pathway for housing that low- and middle-income families can afford. The losers are working people, renters, and the neighborhoods they call home.

Simply saying “we need more housing” does not justify demolishing rent-controlled homes, displacing small businesses, or erasing the public vistas that define San Francisco. You can not bulldoze your way to affordability. Real abundance comes from renovation, preservation, and targeted investment, not blanket upzoning that fuels speculation.

We respectfully ask that you:

- **Oppose SB 79** and vote “No” in committee and on the floor — or at the very least, register as a No Vote Recorded (NVR).
- **Support legal and legislative efforts** to challenge inflated RHNA numbers and the false housing crisis narrative being used to justify these excessive and outdated mandates. We strongly urge you to reassess outdated population projections that are working to punish San Francisco.
- **Defend San Francisco’s right to plan for growth** in a way that protects renters, small businesses, historic fabric, neighborhood livability, and actual affordability.

San Francisco cannot remain silent as Sacramento pushes policies destabilizing our neighborhoods and rewarding speculation. We count on your leadership to advocate for the communities you represent.

Sincerely,

Lori Brooke

Co-Founder, *Neighborhoods United SF*

neighborhoodsunitedsf@gmail.com | <https://nusrf.net>

cc:

Mayor Daniel Lurie

Ned Segal, Mayor’s Advisor on Housing

David Chiu, City Attorney

Board of Supervisors

Planning Commission

Rich Hillis, Planning Director

Sarah Dennis Phillips, Incoming Planning Director

NUSF Alliance Partners:

Aquatic Park Neighbors

Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association

Catalysts for Local Control

Cathedral Hill Neighborhood Association

Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods

Cole Valley Improvement Association

Cow Hollow Association

D2United

D4ward

Diamond Heights Community Association

Dolores Heights Improvement Club
East Mission Improvement Association
Excelsior District Improvement Association
Forest Hill Association
Francisco Park Conservancy
Geary Boulevard Merchants and Property Owners Association
Golden Gate Heights Neighborhood Association
Golden Gate Valley Neighborhood Association
Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association
Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council
Ingleside Terrace Homeowners Assoc
Jordan Park Improvement Association
Lakeside Property Owners Association
La Playa Park Coalition
La Playa Village
Laurel Heights Neighborhood Association
Lincoln Manor Neighborhood Association
Lombard Hill Improvement Association
Marina - Cow Hollow Neighbors and Merchants
Marina Community Association
Mid-Sunset Neighborhood Association
Midtown Terrace Homeowners Association
Miraloma Park Improvement Club
Mission Dolores Neighborhood Association
Noe Valley Council
North Beach Tenants Committee
Oceanview/Merced Heights/Ingleside - Neighbors in Action
Our Neighborhood Voices
Pacific Avenue Neighborhood Association
Parkmerced Action Coalition
Planning Association for the Richmond
Race and Equality in All Planning (REP-SF)
Rincon Point Neighborhood Association
Russian Hill Community Association
Russian Hill Improvement Association
San Francisco Land Use Coalition
San Francisco Tenants Union
Save Our Amazing Richmond
Save Our Neighborhoods SF
Sensible D7

St. Francis Homes Association
Small Business Forward
Sunset Heights Association of Responsible People
Sunset-Parkside Education & Action Committee
Sunset United Neighbors
Telegraph Hill Dwellers
University Terrace Association
Waterfront Action Committee
Westwood Park Association