



SB 899 (Wiener): Allowing places of worship and hospitals to build Affordable Housing

Permit affordable housing on land owned by religious organizations and non-profit hospitals regardless of local zoning restrictions

Background

Faith-based organizations have a long history of partnering with nonprofit developers to build affordable housing. Often these religious organizations have land which they make available for affordable housing developments.

In addition to faith-based organizations, other non-traditional players such as non-profit hospitals have also stepped up to provide affordable housing solutions for their patients whose conditions do not improve due to a lack of stable, affordable housing.

Unfortunately, many of these faith-based organizations and non-profit hospitals are located in areas that are not zoned to permit multifamily housing. This means that the religious institution and affordable housing developer partner have to rezone the land, which is a tricky process that costs money and can cause long delays in building the affordable housing units Californians need.

Proposal

The legislature is looking to streamline the building process for faith-based institutions and non-profit hospitals that want to build affordable housing by allowing them to build 100% multifamily affordable housing units (targeted at 80% of Area Median Income and below), regardless of local zoning restrictions. SB 899 (Wiener) would override local zoning restrictions.

These religious institutions and nonprofit hospitals would partner with affordable housing developers and agree to maintain the affordability of these homes for at least 55 years for rental housing and 45 years for homeownership opportunities. Depending on the location of the property and proximity to major roads and commercial zones, religious organizations and non-profit hospitals would be able to build between 40 to 150 new affordable homes without undergoing costly, and time intensive rezonings.

Benefits

SB 899 (Wiener) would make building affordable housing easier, faster, and cheaper for faith-based institutions and nonprofit hospitals that want to build affordable housing. Many of these are already community anchors, and this would help them build stable, safe, affordable housing for local residents and families and open doors to high-resource neighborhoods.

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