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Leslye Corsiglia
Executive Director

July 11, 2017

The Honorable Tom Daly
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Suite 3120
Sacramento, California 95814

Honorable Assemblymember Daly,

Re: Support for Assembly Bill 1515 (Planning and Zoning:Housing)

SV@Home is the voice of affordable housing in Silicon Valley, representing a broad range of interests, from leading employers who are driving the Bay Area economy, to labor and service organizations, to nonprofit and for-profit developers who provide housing and services to those most in need. **On behalf of our members, we write today to voice our support for Assembly Bill 1515.**

Santa Clara County is at the epicenter of the State's housing crisis, with average monthly rents exceeding \$3,500 and median single-family home prices exceeding \$1 million. In 2015, according to Joint Venture Silicon Valley, the region added 64,000 new jobs and only 5,000 housing units. Vacancy rates are at unhealthy lows. And, according to the California Housing Partnership Corporation, the County has a current deficit of 68,000 homes for lower-income families. In addition to current need, the Metropolitan Transportation Agency/Association of Bay Area Government projects that the Bay Area will grow by more than two million people between now and 2040.

Yet despite the current deficit and the upcoming need, some Bay Area cities have not embraced their responsibility to provide new housing in their communities or have approved housing development that is less dense than zoning would allow. Jurisdictions often take these actions because they are faced with significant opposition from local residents over growth. Recent examples include the Town of Los Gatos disapproval of the 320-unit North 40 development proposed by Grosvenor Americas, Summerhill Homes, and Eden Housing (which was thankfully overturned by a judge in June), and the City of Santa Clara's denial of a 151-unit apartment project proposed by Summerhill.

The Housing Accountability Act (HAA) is intended to ensure that cities and counties do not unfairly hinder the development of new housing projects. However, a lack of enforcement mechanisms has allowed jurisdictions to avoid compliance. AB 1515 would strengthen the HAA, and in so doing will make it harder for bad actor jurisdictions to deny new residential development, which puts more pressure on

neighboring “good actor” cities to accommodate new residential growth. It is important to point out that the HAA simply provides relief if a jurisdiction denies a development that is consistent with its general plan and zoning standards.

We have heard that there are attempts to amend the proposed language to include a statement that “the local agency’s finding is assumed to be correct unless no reasonable person could reach that conclusion.” We do not support this amendment, as we believe it would not provide the intended change that is sorely needed to strengthen the HAA.

We thank you for your leadership in working to respond to the State’s housing crisis.

Sincerely,



Leslye Corsiglia
Executive Director

- c. Rodney Wilson, Chief of Staff to Assemblymember Tom Daly (Rodney.Wilson@asm.ca.gov)
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