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**Staff**

Leslye Corsiglia  
*Executive Director*

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Evan Low  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 4126  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember Low,

**Re: Support for Assembly Bill 1397**

SV@Home strongly supports Assembly Bill 1397 (Local planning: housing element: inventory of land for residential development).

SV@Home is a housing policy and advocacy organization that is driving the creation of affordable housing for a more vibrant and equitable Silicon Valley. SV@Home represents a broad range of interests, from leading employers who drive the Bay Area economy, to labor and service organizations, to local government agencies, to nonprofit and for-profit developers who provide housing and services to those most in need.

Our work is challenged by our reality—Santa Clara County is one of the most expensive areas in the country. And while we are located in an area of tremendous wealth, we also have the highest unsheltered homeless population in the country, and our residents on fixed incomes or who earn minimum wages are forced to compete in a housing market where average monthly rental rates exceed \$2,600.

A significant contributor to the high cost of housing is the lack of adequate supply. In recent years, according to the State Department of Housing and Community Development, an average of 80,000 units have been built annually compared to the need for more than 180,000 units—a deficit of 100,000 units a year. While the constrained supply impacts households at all income levels, the housing shortage has a greater impact on lower income families, seniors, and the disabled who are more challenged to pay the premiums that result from an undersupply of housing.

While there are various reasons that supply has not kept up with the need, the lack of available and appropriate sites for residential development poses a real barrier. State Housing Element law requires that local jurisdictions plan for housing growth, and that they produce an inventory of sites that includes land that is appropriately zoned residential. As the author has stated, “when done properly, this site identification can

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be a very effective tool in facilitating the construction of new housing at all income levels.” While many cities and counties work hard to identify sites that can accommodate housing growth, others include sites in their inventories that are small, poorly located, or otherwise infeasible for housing development.

AB 1387 would strengthen Housing Element law to ensure that sites identified in local housing elements are feasible for residential development, and in the right places and at the right densities.

We sincerely appreciate your leadership and thank you for introducing this important measure.

Sincerely,



Leslye Corsiglia  
Executive Director

- To: Tatum Holland, Legislative Aide, Office of Assemblymember Evan Low, [Tatum.Holland@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Tatum.Holland@asm.ca.gov)
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