The 2019-2020 Legislative Session Heats Up

COVID-19 and the resulting Stay in Place Order has impacted the way many things work, and the way a bill becomes a law is one of them! After weeks away from Sacramento, legislators returned this week to hold the first policy committee hearings. Due to the delays in the legislative calendar, the plan is to move bills through committee over a three-week period with the goal of hearing every bill prior to a one-week summer recess in July. When the Legislature returns from recess, it will be back on schedule.

To respond to the backlog of bills, legislative leaders have taken steps to significantly reduce the number of bills that will be heard. And to respond to the budget crisis the State is facing, it is unlikely that bills with a significant budgetary impact will move forward this year. The one thing we do know—housing is one of the top priorities expressed by the Governor and the Legislature. So many of the housing bills are expected to remain in play.

SV@Home has continued to work with the 3Ps Coalition and our other key partners to weigh in on critical bills. In 2019, the Governor signed into law ten important housing bills that addressed the priorities identified by CASA—The Committee to House the Bay Area. This included several important tenant protection bills—a rent cap, just cause eviction protections, and access to legal services. This year, there is considerable focus on the production bills—those that streamline and incentivize the development of housing, particularly housing affordable to lower and moderate-income households.

Note that legislators continue to negotiate bill language, so there are several important bills that we have not yet weighed in on as we await a more final determination of the bills’ impacts. This includes Senator Jim Beall’s SB 795, for which we had previously expressed support; SB 795 has been changed from a bill that would have authorized a form of redevelopment to one that is providing significant General Fund appropriations for housing.

Here are the bills that SV@Home has taken a position on as of today’s date:

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**Production**

[**AB 953 (Ting)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB953)**—**Makes minor amendments to clarify several bills—AB 68 (Ting), AB 881 (Bloom), and SB 13 (Wieckowski)—that streamline and encourage the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

[**AB 1907 (Santiago)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1907)-- would build on last year’s AB 1197, which applied to the City of Los Angeles, by exempting emergency shelters, supportive housing, and affordable housing for lower-income households from CEQA until January 1, 2029. 5/13/20 Update: AB 1907 did not make it out of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee yesterday, so is effectively dead for the year.

[**AB 2345 (Gonzalez)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB2345)-- would expand California’s Density Bonus Law to increase the maximum bonus to 50-percent and increase the maximum number of allowable incentives consistent with enhancements adopted by the City of San Diego, which has resulted in substantially more applications for new affordable homes.

[**AB 2666 (Boerner Horvath)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB2666)**—** would prohibit a local agency from imposing specified requirements on a small home lot development, including setback requirements between units, requirements on the minimum size of each small home lot development, and specified parking requirements.

[**AB 3107 (Bloom)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB3107)**—**would allow housing developments with at least 20% of units set aside for lower-income households to be built on any site designated for commercial use.

[**AB 3155 (Rivas)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB3155)**—**would encourage and expedite the production of housing development projects of ten units or less by leveraging provisions within SB 35 and allowing these small development projects to begin construction with a Tentative Map, along with other provisions.

[**AB 3234 (Gloria**)](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB3234)**—**would make changes to the Subdivision Map Act to eliminate the requirement for a tentative or final map for the development of a small lot subdivision, as defined by the Housing Accountability Act, if it meets specified criteria.

[**SB 899 (Wiener)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB899)**—**would, streamline the development process for faith-based organizations and nonprofit hospitals to enable them to build 100% multi-family affordable housing developments (targeted at 80% of Area Median Income and below) regardless of local zoning restrictions.

[**SB 902 (Wiener)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB902)**—**Would allow the development of duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes by right in single-family neighborhoods, superseding local zoning rules that have traditionally limited density. Additionally, the bill will provide incentives for larger cities that are willing to allow ten-unit developments, providing they are near high quality public transportation or are in a job-rich area.

[**SB 1085 (Skinner)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB1085)**—**Would address concerns with the State’s Density Bonus Law that have proven to be a barrier to the development of affordable housing.

**Preservation**

[**AB 2058 (Gabriel)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB2058)**—**would create an affordable housing preservation tax credit, with a $500 million initial allocation, to preserve existing affordable apartments and mobilehome parks throughout the State.

**Protection**

[**AB 2272 (Gabriel)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB2272)**—**would establish the Stable Communities Fund to provide eviction defense as well as short-term rental assistance to tenants with incomes that do not exceed 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

**Homelessness**

[**AB 2553 (Ting)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB2553)**--** would give all cities and counties in the State the regulatory flexibility to expedite the construction of shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness by waiving or suspending CEQA requirements when a shelter crisis is declared.

[**AB 2988 (Chu)**](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB2988)**--** would allow supportive housing by right in zones where emergency shelters are permitted.

[**AB 3300 (Santiago**)](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB3300)—would appropriate $2 billion in ongoing funding to large cities, counties, homeless Continuum of Care Consortiums, and affordable housing developers to expedite the delivery of homeless housing, rental and housing assistance, and wrap-around services to those in need.