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*Executive Director*

May 16, 2017

The Honorable Scott Wiener  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Suite 4066  
Sacramento, California 95814

Honorable Senator Wiener,

**Re: Support for Senate Bill 35 (Planning and zoning: affordable housing: streamlined approval process)**

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 Senate Bill 35.**

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.

Santa Clara County is not alone. Each region of the State faces a different housing challenge, threatening the State's economy and quality of life. More than 1.7 million Californians pay more than half of their income for rent, leaving little to pay for other needs. Earlier this year, the State's Housing and Community Development Department released a Statewide Housing Assessment- "California's Housing Future"—which finds that the State needs to add at least 1.8 million homes to address anticipated household growth from 2015 to 2025, that local governments are not permitting enough housing to meet the need, and that "lack of enforcement of State housing laws limit the effectiveness of existing tools intended to guide housing development." It is critical that the State of California provide leadership in response.

SB 35, a bold proposal to streamline the development process when a project meets local planning and zoning codes, is a step in the right direction. This bill will help local jurisdictions respond to community opposition to development, and ensure that local housing elements are not just planning documents, but are planning and implementation documents. It will also reduce the cost of development by providing more certainty and by avoiding unnecessary litigation costs and delays.

SV@Home supported—if amended-- Governor Brown’s by-right housing proposal last summer. We appreciate that you have worked with stakeholders to address concerns, and that you have indicated a willingness to continue these discussions as SB 35 moves its way through the legislative process.

Key features we support:

1. A streamlined ministerial process for projects that is clear, reasonable, objective and timely for those projects that are consistent with existing zoning and include a minimum number of affordable units.
2. Approvals do not expire for projects where a majority of the units are affordable to lower-income households.
3. The streamlined process is only available for projects that serve income groups not being served by a jurisdiction in accordance with its regional housing needs numbers. If a jurisdiction is meeting its market-rate housing needs but not its lower-income housing needs, then only income restricted affordable housing developments would qualify for streamlining. If a jurisdiction is meeting all of its housing needs, by income group, then streamlining would not be available.
4. Tie determination of streamlining to the locality’s Annual Production Report.

We do request one important change-- the bill currently would allow streamlining when a jurisdiction has not approved sufficient above moderate-income housing, if it provides the greater of 10% or the local inclusionary percentage of units at affordable levels (80% AMI). We recommend that for rental housing, streamlining be allowed if a developer agrees to include a minimum of 15% of the units in a project as affordable, with at least 5% targeted to very-low income households (at 50% of area median income).

We thank you for your leadership in working to respond to the State’s housing crisis, as well as your willingness to work with a wide range of partners to design a law that will result in more homes for Californians—with a requirement that affordable housing be an integral part of each development.

Sincerely,



Leslye Corsiglia  
Executive Director

- c. Ann Fryman, Legislative Aide, Senator Scott Wiener ([AnnFryman@sen.ca.gov](mailto:AnnFryman@sen.ca.gov))  
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