



CITY OF SOLANA BEACHwww.cityofsolanabeach.org635 SOUTH HIGHWAY 101 • SOLANA BEACH, CA 92075 • (858) 720-2400 • Fax (858) 720-2455

May 15, 2025

Senate Appropriations (*See Cal Cities for mailing information*)

SUBJECT: SB 79 (Wiener) Transit-oriented Development
Notice of Opposition of Proposed Legislation as Amended

Dear Appropriations Chair Caballero,

The City of Solana Beach writes to express our strong opposition to SB 79 (Wiener) as proposed, and amended (05/13/25). This bill significantly extends housing streamlining in a manner that is harmful financially to Cities and their current and future residents. First and foremost, this bill completely disregards a City's compliance with, and completion of, their state-certified Housing Elements, a regular – annual and periodic – comprehensive (and costly) technical analysis and reporting of housing planning, allocation, and implementation. But furthermore, it also bestows land use authority to transit agencies and other private property owners without any coordination with the City as it relates to the provision of public safety, services or essential infrastructure.

The City of Solana Beach is a 3.5 square mile, built out city, bordered by ocean, lagoons, and unincorporated parks and open space on all four sides. While the station in our City meets the requirements for Tier 3, the North County Transit District (NCTD) and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) have recorded and documented that the City of Solana Beach transit station is a limited use station that does not reflect a high commuter population and use. This station more typically supports visitor-serving Amtrak access, specifically for those visiting the coastal areas on the weekends and holidays, as well as the Del Mar fairgrounds for seasonal events and programs. Further, this station is located within one block of the City's beaches and is not in a centralized location as is typically found in large cities and urbanized, commuter communities.

The proposed legislation, including as amended, would create a significant disconnect between the provision of housing and the necessary public services, public facilities and infrastructure to support current and future residents. Specifically, limited water and sewer facilities within our City could be significantly impacted by development at greater intensity and density as would be permitted under this legislation. Further, important requirements such as a water supply assessment and educational facility planning would be foregone if this legislation moves forward as proposed.

With respect to the recent amendments, this puts further financial burdens on cities – particularly small cities – to conduct further costly studies of land use and zoning for housing. Preparation of a local TOD alternative plan forces cities to expend additional

money to prepare studies that, given the proposed density and intensity permitted under this bill, would most certainly result in the need for additional public safety and other services, and improved and/or expanded infrastructure such as parks, libraries, and schools. In Solana Beach and other similar cities, while we have planned for housing in compliance with our RHNA allocation, concentrated development of those units within SB 79-identified areas may result in needs of the existing and future residents that simply cannot be met within the built-out land use patterns of a small City with hard boundaries. This further demonstrates that the Housing Element process which inventories available sites throughout a City, and strategies to pair housing with jobs and commercial development already in place, is preferable to the proposed legislation, including as amended.

The City of Solana Beach is a partner in the development of new housing for our current and future residents as shown in our over 300 units presently under construction and 350 in the pre-application phase. However, as currently drafted, SB 79 will not spur much-needed housing construction in a manner that ensures fiscal responsibility and adequate City services. State-driven ministerial or by-right housing approval processes fail to recognize the extensive public engagement already done that resulted in the pairing of the necessary public facilities, public services, and infrastructure with new housing. For these reasons, the City of Solana Beach strongly opposes SB 79.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lesa Heebner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lesa" and last name "Heebner" clearly distinguishable.

Lesa Heebner
Mayor
City of Solana Beach

cc. Senator Catherine Blakespear
Assembly Member Tasha Boerner
Catherine Hill, League Regional Public Affairs Manager
League of California Cities, cityletters@cacities.org