



SB827 Fails to Pass Transportation and Housing Committee

We're disappointed that SB827, Senator Scott Wiener's transit-housing bill, failed to pass the Transportation and Housing Committee this afternoon—but this is just the beginning. California is in the midst of its worst housing crisis in modern history, one that cannot be solved without bold legislation like SB827, and we will be back with better, stronger housing bills to make this state affordable once again.

Everyone in the YIMBY movement should recognize that we are at the beginning of this journey. The forces opposed to housing have held sway for a generation, and we must rally a new coalition to demand bold thinking. Pro-housing forces are a rising tide, and we recognize that this will be an uphill battle.

SB827 was an ambitious bill based on an uncontroversial premise: California must build more housing if it is to reduce rents and displacement, and must build this housing near transit to meet its emissions goals and fight climate change.

The bill was greeted with strong support: Environmental groups like the Natural Resource Defense Council, Climate Resolve, and Environment California wrote that "SB 827 represents the scale of action necessary to meaningfully address the affordable housing and environmental crises."

The Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California, a statewide organization with over 750 members, including affordable housing developers and advocates, wrote that "SB 827 is a bold approach to address our state's affordable housing crisis by promoting inclusive growth and protecting existing affordability" and lauded its expansion of inclusionary housing.

A group of fair housing experts, including Richard Rothstein, author of "The Color of Law," said that "SB 827 is a significant and laudable effort to attack the problem of racial and economic segregation both directly and indirectly" and called it "one of the most innovative and important efforts in the nation to attack restrictive and exclusionary local land use policies."

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YIMBY Action advocates for affordable and market-rate housing to address our housing crisis and bring down the cost of housing in San Francisco and the Bay Area.



YIMBY groups up and down the state, including our own, pushed hard for the bill as the best solution for building the millions of units California will need to become affordable once again.

"SB827 was the most ambitious housing bill to come from California or any other state legislature in living memory," said Laura Foote Clark, the executive director of YIMBY Action. "It represented the a far-reaching and structural change to housing policy in the state and would have done the most of any recent initiatives to prevent future displacement and welcome back those who have been forced to leave."

Still, the bill faced opposition from local city councils to tenants groups. Some of these concerns were understandable, and Senator Wiener implemented right to return protections and inclusionary housing requirements meant to address issues of gentrification and displacement.

We look forward to working further on equity concerns to draft a bill that's even stronger when it comes before the legislature in the future.

Much opposition, however, was scaremongering, plain and simple. Opponents, from Marin homeowners to Beverly Hills politicians to San Francisco mayoral candidates, lied about the bill and decried its effects on "neighborhood character." They held signs showing apartments in low-lying areas and warned of a loss of local control. Such tactics were meant to maintain exclusionary zoning that prevent cities from growing and ban apartment buildings in favor of expensive suburban manses.

The biggest hope of SB827 was that it would strike at the heart of a zoning regime that has maintained a stranglehold on California cities and prevented their equitable growth for decades. We are proud to have been part of that fight. Despite this setback, we're glad to be a group that bites off more than it can chew and will continue to propose bold housing legislation in the months and years ahead.

We will return with a better SB827 in the future and will work tirelessly until it passes. We must be clear: There is no solution to our housing crisis that does not involve statewide upzoning to allow a radical increase in supply. The housing crisis will require a variety of

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solutions, but none will be sufficient without expanding the pie and creating more homes for all current and future Californians.

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