April 28, 2024  
  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** [MILL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA, April 28, 2024] - Catalysts Institute for Local Control reports that on April 22, 2024 Superior Court Judge Curtis A. Kin of the County of Los Angeles (City of Redondo Beach, et al., v. California Attorney General Rob Bonta, et al., Case No. 22STCP0143) ruled that Senate Bill 9 (hence SB 9) was unconstitutional for charter cities.

SB 9 is a 2022-implemented law allowing existing property owners to ministerially split a parcel into four different homes. Attorney Pam Lee’s argument centered on the premise that SB 9 was "neither reasonably related to its stated concern of ensuring access to affordable housing nor narrowly tailored to avoid interference with local government.”

The Court discussed the difference between "affordable housing" meaning below market rate housing per Lee & Redondo Beach, or the state's definition of "housing affordability at all income levels," eventually siding with Lee.

The Court further stated ”Respondents present no evidence to support the assertion that the unzoning permitted by SB 9 would result in any increase in the supply of below market-rate housing,” quoted case law that "There is also virtually no evidence that substantially lower costs trickle down to lower two-thirds of households" and concluded “SB 9 is therefore unconstitutional as violative of the "home rule" doctrine.”

Catalysts congratulates Attorney Pam Lee, Aleshire & Wynder, LLP, as well as the cities of Redondo Beach, Carson, Torrance, Whittier, and Del Mar on their hard-fought victory and encourages all cities to explore options available to them in reclaiming local control.

Attorney Pam Lee will be the speaker at Catalysts’ Town Hall Zoom on May 2, 2024, at 5 pm (register from the website). Susan Kirsch, Catalysts Director said, “Pam Lee is a warrior for the people. Her legal prowess shows that we can take a bold stand and win in this David/Goliath battle for local control."

Mike Griffiths, former Torrance City Council member and founder of California Cities for Local Control, says “This win over the State gives hope and courage to many cities in California that we can stand up and work together to fight bad bills. Local control over land use and zoning is something still worth protecting.”

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