



POB 1703, Mill Valley, CA 94942
CatalystsCA.org 415-686-4375

July 10, 2025

Senator Aisha Wahab, Chair, Senate Housing Committee

**RE: AB-557 (McKinnor), AB-660 (Wilson), AB-818 (Farias), AB-920 (Wicks), AB-1050 (Schultz) OPPOSE
Housing: streamlining permitting, regulatory reduction, reducing oversight**

Dear Senate Housing Committee:

We have widespread agreement. Housing costs are going through the roof. Residents can't afford to live in California. Legislators, parroting the simplicity of the YIMBY narrative, call it a supply and demand crisis. Their solution is to pass bills that make it easier for developers to build more units, higher, denser, and faster. Who benefits from that? Monopoly investors and developers. Yet housing grows increasingly unaffordable.

Growing research (see citations below) and everyday experience makes it clear: CA housing policy is missing the mark. Housing monopolies, like oil and pharmaceutical giants, are becoming more powerful and richer while communities and taxpayers grow poorer, shouldering unfunded mandates and the financial, environmental, safety, and mental health burdens of special interest policy.

What is the likelihood of success? These bills are likely to achieve the developer/investors' goals of building high-density renter compounds that make profit in perpetuity while bankrupting cities. The bills fail to meet residents' goals for wages and tax policy that makes housing affordable. The bills undermine the California dream of home ownership. They do not protect against sprawl, nor do they enable communities to meet the inflated, unrealistic Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) mandates.

What happened to critical thinking, problem analysis, public discourse, and transparency?

What has Democratic leadership come to? The tactics of Governor Newsom, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (AB-130), and Senator Wiener (SB-131) to pass the most consequential environmental legislation of the decade as a budget trailer bill, under the threat of missing the budget deadline, is alarming. You legislators, who got the language for ending CEQA on Friday, had to vote on Monday. You were by-standers to procedures that normally require committee hearings and public and media input. The scenario disturbingly looks like Congress forcing through the president's "Big Beautiful Bill." We must do better.

We urge you to support constituents. OPPOSE these five bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Kirsch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" being more prominent than the last name "Kirsch".

Susan Kirsch, Director
Catalysts for Local Control

Citations:

1. <https://www.newgeography.com/content/007221-higher-urban-densities-associated-with-worst-housing-affordability>
2. <https://www.cato.org/commentary/density-makes-housing-less-affordable-not-more#>
3. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w33576> - Supply Constraints do not Explain House Price and Quantity Growth Across U.S. Cities; Louie Schuyler, John A. Mondragon, & Johannes Wieland
4. <https://48hills.org/2025/03/new-study-by-fed-economists-directly-contradicts-yimby-narrative-on-housing-prices/>