



CITY OF
T O R R A N C E

October 9, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 5120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for Veto – SB 79 (Wiener): Housing development: transit-oriented development

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Torrance, I respectfully urge you to veto Senate Bill 79 (Wiener), which would waive state-certified housing elements and delegate land use authority to transit agencies without any obligation for developers to construct housing, let alone affordable housing

SB 79 continues the recent trend of the state overriding its mandated local housing elements. This latest overreach compels cities to approve transit-oriented development projects near designated transit stops—up to seven stories in height and with a density of 120 homes per acre—regardless of community needs, environmental considerations, or public input.

Torrance's recently approved Housing Element clearly demonstrates our ability to meet the State's housing mandate at every level of affordability without densifying single-family neighborhoods and light industrial zones (impacting future job growth).

Most alarmingly, SB 79 defies cities' general plans and provides transit agencies with unlimited land use authority on property they own or have permanent easement, regardless of the distance from a transit stop. Transit agencies would have the power to determine all aspects of the development including height, density, and design, without any regard to local zoning or planning.

This broad new authority applies to both residential and commercial development. Transit agencies could develop 100% commercial projects – even at transit stops – and not provide a single new home, while simultaneously making the argument that more housing must be constructed around transit stops.

The City of Torrance appreciates and respects the desire to pursue a housing production proposal. However, as currently drafted, SB 79 will not spur much-needed housing construction in a manner that supports local flexibility, decision making, and community input. State-driven ministerial or by-right housing approval processes fail to recognize the extensive public engagement associated with developing and adopting zoning ordinances and housing elements.

California will never produce the number of homes needed with an increasingly state-driven, by-right housing approval process. What we really need is a sustainable state investment that matches the scale

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of this decades-in-the-making crisis. For these reasons, the City of Torrance strongly urges you not to sign SB 79 into law.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Chen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

George Chen
Mayor
City of Torrance

Cc: Senator Ben Allen & Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi
Jeff Kiernan, League Regional Public Affairs Manager (via email)
Meg Desmond, League of California Cities, cityletters@cacities.org