



Tomiquia Moss
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5/7/2021

The Honorable Chair Anthony Portantino
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 478 (Wiener) Housing Opportunity Act - SUPPORT

Dear Honorable Chair Anthony Portantino,

I write on behalf of All Home to support SB 478, which will establish guardrails for floor area ratios regulations and minimum lot size regulations, putting guardrails on local governments' ability to enact hyper restrictive regulations. This bill will ensure honest zoning occurs, meaning the zoning local governments have already approved, is actually developed.

All Home is a Bay Area organization that advances regional solutions to disrupt the cycle of poverty and homelessness, reduce racial disparities among people who experience homelessness, and create more economic mobility opportunities for extremely low-income (ELI) people. We work across counties, sectors, and silos to advance coordinated, innovative solutions and build a movement to challenge the status quo that perpetuates homelessness.

We at All Home believe in breaking down barriers to housing production. The state needs to use all opportunities to promote and support more housing production, as California faces a housing crisis.

Existing housing element law requires local governments to plan and zone for housing through the RHNA process, but also allows them to set regulations on housing that can actually back-door prohibit the production of this housing. These regulations include floor area ratios and minimum lot sizes. This bill proposes to set uniform standards for local governments on these two housing regulations, closing this loophole within current law that does not allow localities to build the amount of housing they have already planned for.

The floor area ratio (FAR) of a property is the total area of the floor space in a building, potentially over several floors or units, divided by the area of the entire lot. FAR restrictions control how large a building can be, based on how large the parcel of land is. For example, a lot with a floor area ratio of 1.0 allows a one-story building over the entire lot, a two-story building over half the lot, or a three-story building over a third of the lot. A minimum lot size requirement is a zoning code regulation that specifies the minimum square footage a lot size can be. This term regulates density and describes the smallest lot that can legally be created within a local jurisdiction. In some areas, lot size minimums can be as large as an acre, or about 43,000 sq. feet. If the minimum lot size is large, people are required to purchase a larger piece of land than what is needed, limiting potential buyers and increasing housing costs. In some communities, the per home minimum land cost can be more than \$500,000.

This bill would allow local governments to regulate FAR and minimum lot sizes in the ways they deem most appropriate for their communities, but it puts guardrails on this right to prevent abuse against very restrictive standards that increase housing costs and exacerbate segregation. This bill would not require local governments to

allow multifamily housing where they do not allow it. It also does not change other standards, such as height or setbacks. It simply puts important guardrails on design standards that can easily be abused, to ensure that the housing already planned for is not undermined by hyper-restrictive design rules.

It is for these reasons that All Home urges your support on SB 478.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tomiquia Moss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tomiquia Moss
Founder & CEO, All Home