



March 15, 2023

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 423 (WIENER) LAND USE: STREAMLINED HOUSING APPROVALS:
MULTIFAMILY HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Scott Wiener,

On behalf of Climate Action Campaign (CAC), I write in support of Senate Bill 423, which removes the January 1, 2026 sunset provisions of SB 35 (Wiener, 2017). SB 423 would continue to authorize streamlined, ministerial approval process for infill developments in local jurisdictions that have failed to meet their Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) goals or adopt a compliant housing element, provided that the development is located on a site that is both, urban infill and zoned for residential or mixed-use.

CAC is a nonprofit organization based in San Diego and Orange County with a simple mission: to create a zero carbon future through effective and equitable policy action. At minimum, everyone deserves quality housing that is affordable, healthy, safe and in close proximity to life's essential services such as public transit, good schools, family-sustaining jobs, parks, and grocery stores.

The transportation sector makes up the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in California and the San Diego region. Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is key to securing sustainable, climate-resilient communities. A key strategy to reducing VMT and therefore slashing GHG emissions, is the creation of inclusive, thriving, and affordable communities where all residents have access to bikeable and walkable neighborhoods. This is exactly what CAC advocates for and aligns with the intent of SB 423.

Since its passage in 2017, SB 35 has become an engine of subsidized affordable housing production, leading to the streamlined approval of over [18,000 new homes](#), most of which are subsidized homes affordable to low-income households. Although SB 35 has been used successfully across the state since its passage, it is set to expire on January 1, 2026. Without an extension, one of the driving forces of affordable housing production will cease.

The consensus among researchers is that housing scarcity pushes up housing costs. In other words, many cities have high rates of homelessness because they have high housing costs; and they have high housing costs because they haven't built enough housing to meet the demand. California YIMBY recently published a report titled "[Housing Abundance as a Condition for Ending Homelessness](#)", which looked at why Houston has better results than California when it comes to reducing homelessness. The report found that Houston has more liberal land use policies that have allowed the city to add large quantities of new housing stock as its population has grown.

As our state continues to grapple with a housing crisis it would be unconscionable to allow a statutory tool, proven to increase housing production, to lapse.

SB 423 is a straightforward solution that will remove the sunset date indefinitely to permit streamlining for both 100% subsidized affordable housing and mixed-income housing that sets aside units for lower-income residents. Additionally, SB 423 will remove the current coastal zone exemption in SB 35, which will ensure the housing that is desperately needed in these jurisdictions is built and that Californians are not priced out of living in coastal communities.

For these reasons, CAC supports SB 423 (Wiener).

Sincerely,

Madison Coleman

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Policy Advocate

Climate Action Campaign