



CITY OF LA VERNE CITY HALL

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www.cityoflaverne.org

September 23, 2025

Honorable Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Submitted via email
Leg.Unit@gov.ca.gov

RE: Request for Veto of SB 79 (Wiener) – Transit-Oriented Development Zoning

On behalf of the City of La Verne, we must respectfully but firmly urge you to veto SB 79. Despite its stated intent to expand housing near transit, this bill steamrolls local decision-making, ignores community realities, and hands zoning authority to agencies with no accountability to the people most affected.

SB 79 grants transit agencies unprecedented power to override City zoning and impose their own development standards. These agencies are not planning bodies, yet this bill elevates them above local governments that are directly responsible for land use, infrastructure, and safety. At the same time, the bill imposes rigid density and height formulas, forcing one-size-fits-all development into communities regardless of infrastructure limits, topography, or public safety concerns.

The 'local TOD alternative plan' process provides little practical flexibility. The requirements are highly restrictive, and HCD's broad review authority leaves cities with limited ability to adapt zoning to reflect local infrastructure and community needs. Meanwhile, SB 79 opens the door to displacement by allowing demolition of existing affordable and rent-controlled housing in the name of producing new units, trading one crisis for another.

More broadly, SB 79 reflects a troubling trend where the State continues to wield the stick instead of the carrot. Rather than incentivizing housing production through funding, infrastructure investment, and genuine partnership with cities, this bill once again imposes punitive mandates that erode local control. If California is serious about meeting housing goals, the focus should be on collaboration and incentives, not prescriptive dictates that ignore community realities.

La Verne supports smart housing solutions near transit, but they must be designed through thoughtful, collaborative planning that respects local authority. SB 79 does the opposite: it prioritizes speed over sustainability, bureaucracy over accountability, and mandates over meaningful community input. For these reasons, the City of La Verne must respectfully request your veto of SB 79.

Sincerely,

Tim Hepburn
Mayor

