

May 3, 2022

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 4240
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Assembly Bill (AB) 2244 - Housing Production on Religious Properties - Support

Dear Assemblymember Wicks,

On behalf of MidPen Housing Corporation, we write in support of AB 2244 (Wicks), which would reduce residential parking requirements for newly constructed religious institutions and allow the development of critically needed affordable housing projects.

MidPen Housing is one of the nation's leading nonprofit developers, owners and managers of high-quality, affordable housing and onsite resident services. Since MidPen was founded in 1970, we have developed over 100 communities and 8,000 homes for low-income families, seniors and those with supportive housing needs throughout Northern California.

California's religious communities are leading innovative efforts to redevelop portions of their property to alleviate the state's housing crisis. Religious institutions across the state are working with cities from Oakland to Los Angeles to discuss turning underused land into housing. However, plans to build housing on newly proposed developments have hit roadblocks. Current state law eases parking requirements for housing on religious properties, but local governments have interpreted that it only applies to existing religious institutions, not new ones proposed to be developed. These interpretations strictly limit the applicability of this important housing option for all future congregations that may wish to support and address the housing needs of their local community.

AB 2244 will clarify that the reduction of residential parking requirements for housing development on religious properties applies equally to existing and proposed religious institutions. This is an important step towards helping low-income Californians find stable housing opportunities.

Thank you for your leadership on these critical housing and homelessness issues and for all these reasons, we support AB 2244.

Sincerely,



Matthew O. Franklin
President & CEO, MidPen Housing Corporation



Building Communities. Changing Lives.

cc:

Senator Mike McGuire
Senator Bill Dodd
Senator Jim Nielsen
Senator Steve Glazer
Senator Nancy Skinner
Senator Bob Wieckowski
Senator Scott Wiener
Senator Anna Caballero
Senator Josh Becker
Senator Dave Cortese
Senator John Laird
Assemblymember Marc Levine
Assemblymember Jim Frazier
Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan
Assemblymember Mia Bonta
Assemblymember Phil Ting
Assemblymember Bill Quirk
Assemblymember Kevin Mullin
Assemblymember Marc Berman
Assemblymember Alex Lee
Assemblymember Ash Kalra
Assemblymember Mark Stone
Assemblymember Robert Rivas
Nevada V. Merriman, Director of Policy, MidPen Housing