

March 18, 2025

The Honorable Gail Pellerin
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 6310
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 282 (Pellerin). Discrimination: housing: source of income – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Pellerin:

MidPen Housing is pleased to write to you in support of your bill AB 282, which will expand housing opportunities for low-income participants of rental assistance programs.

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 139 communities and over 10,000 homes for low-income families, seniors and those with supportive housing needs throughout Northern California.

In California, housing discrimination based on source of income has been prohibited for many years. Until recently, this definition excluded rental assistance and other housing subsidy payments, such as Housing Choice Vouchers, meaning that housing providers were legally permitted to refuse to rent to participants of the programs.

In 2019, SB 329 was passed, which revised the definition of "source of income" to include housing subsidies, thereby prohibiting discrimination based on participation in such a program. This legislation was passed with the explicit intent to create more housing opportunities and make it easier for participants of rental assistance programs to secure a place to call home. While SB 329 succeeds at preventing discrimination against rental assistance participants, the operative language was written in such a way that unintentionally prohibited housing providers from establishing a preference for renting to participants in rental assistance programs.

As a result, this limits the extent to which housing providers can expand housing opportunities for low-income individuals and families participating in rental assistance programs, which is counter to the original intent of the legislation. While the proposed legislation would assist low-income families in utilizing their rental assistance and finding an available unit, it could also assist housing providers. In addition to housing authorities and non-profits whose mission is to exclusively serve low-income families, private market owners could use a preference for rental assistance recipients to receive market-rate rents while meeting their inclusionary requirements to rent a certain percentage of homes to low-income families, thereby potentially promoting the financial viability of those projects.

In summary, AB 282 would increase housing opportunities and mobility for low-income families, would assist housing authorities in fully utilizing federally funded rental assistance vouchers, and could also improve the viability of affordable and market rate housing developments.

Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact Nevada V. Merriman, Vice President of Policy & Advocacy, at 650-477-6195 or nmerriman@midpen-housing.org

Best Regards,



Matthew O. Franklin
President and CEO

CC: Nevada V. Merriman, Vice President of Policy & Advocacy, MidPen Housing