

May 6, 2025

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8140
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 609 (Wicks) – California Environmental Quality Act: Infill Housing Exemption – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

MidPen Housing is pleased to write to you in support of your bill AB 609, which exempts environmentally friendly housing projects from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), making California more affordable and resilient to climate change.

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.

While CEQA effectively prevents negative environmental impacts, it is not designed to facilitate projects that are inherently beneficial to the environment. Infill housing near jobs, schools, and amenities—proven to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions—faces the same regulatory hurdles as sprawl developments that increase pollution and congestion.

AB 609 removes this roadblock by exempting environmentally friendly housing projects from CEQA, provided they are in infill locations and not on environmentally sensitive or hazardous sites. These projects must still comply with local general plans, zoning ordinances, and objective standards—all of which have already undergone CEQA review. To qualify, projects must meet minimum density thresholds (15 units per acre in urban areas, 10 in suburban areas, and 5 in rural areas) and be no larger than 20 acres.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 609. 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