

May 27, 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 Assembly Member Wicks,

On behalf of the City of Eureka, I write in support of Assembly Bill 609, which exempts environmentally friendly housing projects from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), making California more affordable and resilient to climate change.

California's housing shortage is exacerbated by CEQA's redundant review process. While regional plans, housing elements, and local zoning laws must already comply with CEQA, most individual housing projects—even those fully aligned with local zoning and objective standards—must still undergo the same review. Some projects qualify for exemptions, but these are often too subjective or include costly labor standards making housing financially infeasible.

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, the City of Eureka is proud to support AB 609 (Wicks).

Sincerely,

Kim Bergel  
Mayor

