

## 8. Local Review

What is your opinion of the Budget Trailer Bill 707's (or similar bills) by-right exemption from environmental review?

### Stewart Carl:

I do not support bill 707, or the concept of by-right exemptions.

### Leonard Ely III:

DID NOT ANSWER

### Adrian Fine:

Budget trailer bill 707 - which did not pass - *did not provide exemptions from environmental review*. It was intended to exempt projects with 20%+ affordable from local appeals. Under 707, projects still had to meet local comprehensive plans, zoning, and environmental review - but if they met a set of circumstances (<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/housing4agrowingca.html>), local appeals would not have been allowed.

### John Fredrich:

I did not favor Gov. Brown's approach to this any more than his take on HSR or the two tunnels. The conflict with CEQA that by-right created did not need to be there. The \$400 million should have been funded without impairing local review.

### Arthur Keller:

I am opposed to Budget Trailer Bill 707 or similar bills. Fortunately, this bill failed. But two other sets of bills did pass the California legislature and are awaiting the Governor's signature. AB 2501 (Bloom) amends the State Housing Density Bonus Law to restrict what documents Palo Alto can require for evaluation. SB 1069 (Wieckowski) limits city regulations of Accessory Dwelling Units.

As a result of these new sets of State laws, Palo Alto needs to update its ordinance implementing the State Housing Density Bonus Law. I support prohibition on any increase in office space as a concession.

And Palo Alto should update its Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance to conform to State law. Not only should we prohibit Accessory Dwelling Units from being rented through Airbnb for transient use, but also we should preserve existing and new Accessory Dwelling Units and Cottages as part of our housing stock.

## **Liz Kniss:**

Our city council took a strong stand of opposition to this preemption of local control. As President of the Peninsula Division of League of California Cities, I joined my colleagues from many other cities to defeat this bill which would have given the state control over our local governing bodies. While affordable housing is an important priority for our state, region, and city, our local processes such as review by our Architectural Review Board and Planning & Transportation Commission are important city functions which should not be preempted by the state. One size does not fit all, and Sacramento should remember that.

## **Lydia Kou:**

This bill does not and will not address affordable housing crisis; it only gives developers special exemptions at the expense of the local residents and working families while reducing environment and tenant protections.

This bill proposed by Gov. Brown is a way to quash residents' ability to fight mega developers. In his own words, at the Urban Land Institute conference, when describing his time as Oakland's Mayor, he said "every Oakland project I proposed was opposed at City Council by one group of neighbors or activists." Gov. Brown continues his practice of putting communities and our environment at risk

Gov. Brown calls his bill The Streamlining Affordable Housing Approvals Bill, it sets aside \$400 million from the 2016-17 California State Budget for affordable housing programs. That's \$400 million for the entire state. Let's do some math:

\$400M and let's say that each unit costs about \$500,000 to build, that would make 800 units. For the entire State of California!

And, these affordable housing funds come with "**catastrophic strings**" because Brown's proposal requires "by right" land use entitlements for developers.

Had this Bill passed, it would have –

1. Taken away local public oversight.
2. Allowed developers to bypass much of established local governmental approval processes for new high density residential construction. It eliminates local government review.
3. Eliminated previous legislated State and Local environment review.
4. This Bill is "top down" governance legislating a "one size fits all" solution without regard for any cumulative impacts occulting at the local level, i.e. destroying K-12 education quality, causing school overcrowding, increasing already problematic traffic congestion, straining city services and infrastructure.

We all have to be vigilant to keep this kind of "top down" governance from becoming legislation.

## **Danielle Martell:**

DID NOT RESPOND

**Don McDougall:**

The devil is in the details here. In general I do not favor lawsuits against projects that meet the goals of the Housing Element and provide options to meet the needs of people struggling with housing challenges. There is no legislation now pending and I cannot comment in the abstract without seeing a specific proposal.

**Greer Stone:**

Laws like the Budget Trailer Bill 707 would strip local control and circumvent the will of the neighborhoods. Cities have, and should have, the right to control the future of their city. We, as Palo Altans, know what is best for Palo Alto, not Sacramento.

I am also opposed to Bill 707 because it would reduce the amount of below market rate housing already mandated by our inclusionary zoning law. The Bill would only require 5 to 10 percent of the units be made affordable if the housing is built near a transit center, such as a bus stop or train station. My proposal aims at increasing our inclusionary zoning from 15 to 25 percent. Bill 707 would lead to less below market rate housing, and undermine the very intent of the Bill.

**Greg Tanaka:**

This is one of the CEQA “corrections” bills that has been one of Gov. Brown’s priorities in Sacramento. I believe these bills preempt local control. Many of these issues can be addressed by Palo Alto moving more quickly to update the Comprehensive Plan, and then dive right into focus plans—which will have their own environmental impact report with mitigations specific to the identified preferred plan.