



For Immediate Release

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Los Angeles Sides With Wealthy Elites, Opposes SB 79 on False Grounds

LOS ANGELES, CA — In a stunning display of misplaced priorities, the City Council of Los Angeles has formally [opposed](#) SB 79 (Wiener), [a bill](#) designed to advance equity, sustainability, and affordability in California by building more housing near transit. Instead of listening to the needs of everyday Angelenos who struggle with rising rents, dangerous commutes, and worsening climate impacts, city leaders have chosen to elevate the voices of a wealthy, entrenched elite.

SB 79 is a straightforward, commonsense measure rooted in sound planning and economic justice that will get housing built where we need it most: near trains and buses. Yet Los Angeles has rejected it based on arguments that are not only misleading but demonstrably false. The city’s opposition relies on fearmongering and unsubstantiated claims—ignoring decades of research showing that smart growth, transit-oriented development, and equitable housing policy improve safety, affordability, and livability.

“Los Angeles is claiming to stand up for residents, but in reality it is standing in the way of progress and affordability,” said Marc Vukceвич, Director of State Policy for Streets For All. “By protecting the interests of wealthy homeowners, the city is perpetuating inequality and climate disaster, but preventing proven solutions for working families.”

This decision highlights a troubling pattern: when forced to choose between evidence-based policy that benefits the majority and the narrow interests of wealthy homeowners, Los Angeles too often sides with privilege. The city’s resistance to SB 79 undermines its own commitments to fight climate change, reduce traffic, and create affordable housing near jobs and transit.

Los Angeles circumvented its normal process: this vote did not go to committee. Council members were not given appropriate time to review the bill which was made obvious by inaccurate comments made during the meeting.

Who Los Angeles Is Really Listening To

- **Wealthy homeowners** who fear change more than they fear inequality or climate collapse.
- **Exclusive NIMBY neighborhood groups** who wield disproportionate political power that they use to block housing, transit, and walkable communities.
- **Special interests** who benefit from the status quo at the expense of working people.

Who Los Angeles Is Ignoring

- **Renters** who make up the majority of the city yet face skyrocketing housing costs and displacement.

- **Transit riders** who need safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options.
- **Future generations** who will inherit the consequences of today's inaction on climate and the city budget.

“By choosing to oppose SB 79, the LA City Council doubled down on the very problems it claims to want to solve” said Azeen Khanmalek, Executive Director of Abundant Housing LA. “This bill would bring much-needed housing to areas already served by transit, helping working-class Angelenos access jobs, cut commutes, and reduce emissions. Opposing it means sticking with scarcity, sprawl, and car-dependency, which is precisely what we can’t afford.”

A Call for Leadership

It is unacceptable that Los Angeles—a city facing a worsening housing crisis, daily gridlock, and some of the nation’s most polluted air—would reject a bill that helps address these issues. The city must reverse course and put the interests of the many above the demands of the few.

“SB 79 is about fairness, facts, and a better future,” Mahdi Manji, Director of Public Policy for Inner City Law Center added. “Los Angeles can either be a leader in solving the crises of housing and climate, or it can continue to be a cautionary tale of what happens when cities let wealthy elites dictate policy. Today, sadly, it chose the latter.”

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