

July 15, 2020

Hon. Mike McGuire
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 408
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1851 (WICKS) RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION AFFILIATED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS: PARKING REQUIREMENTS – OPPOSE (As Amended 5/15/20)**

Dear Chair McGuire,

On behalf of the City of Thousand Oaks, I respectfully oppose AB 1851. This bill would prohibit a local agency from requiring the replacement of religious-use parking spaces eliminated as part of a proposed affordable housing development project. The percentage of eliminated parking spaces can be up to 50%. This bill also allows the remaining religious-use parking spaces to count toward the parking required for the housing development project.

It is important to note, that the City does not oppose a religious institution from building housing on their property in certain circumstances. With the state's housing shortage, we applaud any effort to support affordable housing or homeless housing opportunities. The City however is concerned about the unintended consequences of arbitrary reduction of parking spaces would have on the surrounding neighborhood.

Most religious institutions in Thousand Oaks are located in residential areas. Residential street parking is already inundated with overflow parking for religious events and weekend services. By reducing existing parking up to 50% and co-mingling remaining parking spaces as residential parking would simply limit or even eliminate parking intended for religious patrons.

In accordance with existing law, accessory dwelling units already preclude certain parking requirements. New affordable housing developments also limit parking requirements. Even group homes and residential care facilities have reduced parking requirements. Residential street parking has become a premium in many neighborhoods. Homeowners have continually voiced concerns about the lack of available street parking for their family and friends or the distance they must park from their home.

While we appreciate the intent of AB 1851, we suggest reduction of parking be an option not a requirement. Cities have planning standards to assure adequate parking is available for public facilities and institutions such as churches and that they provide appropriate access, especially for seniors and the disabled. Cities and religious institutions should instead be allowed to negotiate what parking options works best based on the size of the property, type of housing development, and the impact on surrounding neighborhoods during the permit, planning and public hearing process. A state prescribed percentage is not the best solution.

For these reasons, we oppose AB 1851.

Sincerely,



Al Adam
Mayor

CC: Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin
Senator Henry Stern
David Mullinax- Regional Public Affairs Manager, dmullinax@cacities.org
League of California Cities, cityletters@cacities.org
Joe A. Gonsalves and Son

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