

June 17, 2020

Hon. Anthony Portantino  
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 899 (WIENER) HOUSING DEVELOPMENT. NONPROFIT HOSPITALS OR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS- OPPOSE (As Amended 5/27/20)**

Dear Chair Portantino,

On behalf of the City of Thousand Oaks, we respectfully oppose SB 899. This bill would allow nonprofit hospitals, religious institutions and private universities the ability to develop affordable housing on their property *by-right*. This privilege would even extend to private nursing homes, treatment facilities and private rehabilitation centers.

According to the bill, eligible organizations may work with a developer to construct 100% of the units, with an average income of 80% of the area median income for specified periods. The development would allow ancillary uses on the ground floor of the development. Housing developments would also be eligible for density bonus or other incentives. Cities would not be able to require more than 0.5 parking spaces per unit.

We recognize that California is dealing with a housing shortage, however, affordable housing projects should not be exempt from CEQA or forgo local zoning restrictions. Moreover, these three types of institutional uses have unique and specific benefits and land use impacts that were evaluated by the local agencies at the time such uses were identified and approved. To simply add the right of housing on such institutional parcels ignores the very land use analysis local agencies conduct with the residents and business community when the institutions were initially considered. Private institutions and developers don't often understand the interests of the local community. Eliminating the planning and environmental review process compromises the very integrity of public transparency and participation. CEQA is critical especially when the SB 899 allows "*at least 50 dwelling units per acre*" with a "*maximum height limitation of less than 55 feet.*" Five story developments co-mingled with other institutional uses have greater impact on neighborhoods, and merit proper vetting.

While we believe it is the prerogative of hospitals, faith-based institutions and private universities to build affordable housing on their private property, they should still be subject, like any other housing applicant, to a thorough review process.

For these reasons, we oppose SB 899.

Sincerely,



Al Adam  
Mayor

cc: Senator Scott Weiner  
Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin  
Senator Henry Stern  
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