



SAN
FRANCISCO
**CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

February 22, 2017

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

RE: Support SB 35, Housing Accountability and Affordability Act

Dear Senator Wiener,

The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, representing over 2,500 local businesses with over 200,000 employees in San Francisco and across the Bay Area, supports your bill, SB 35, the Housing Accountability and Affordability Act.

There is a severe housing affordability crisis in San Francisco, across the Bay Area and throughout the state. California's housing production has not kept pace with population growth, particularly for low and middle income residents. This housing shortage threatens the state's economic growth. Our diversity is diminished when homes are too expensive to rent or buy. Commutes are growing longer as employees often can't afford to live in the communities where they work, causing increased traffic congestion and associated carbon emissions, as well as inadequate, overcrowded public transit. In San Francisco families are being pushed out as they seek housing that accommodates their needs.

SB 35 will help spur the creation of affordable housing in California by streamlining the approval process. Under SB 35, cities that are on track to meet Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) housing production goals at all income levels will retain full local control over how they approve housing. When cities face shortages of housing production at certain income levels, approval of qualified housing projects will be streamlined as long as prevailing wages are paid for construction labor, and all environmental and permitting requirements are met.

In order to create affordable housing for all Californians, new regional and statewide approaches are necessary. The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce supports SB 35, and we commend you for your efforts in this regard.

Sincerely,

Jim Lazarus
Senior Vice President of Public Policy