



CITY COUNCILMEMBER  
**RIGEL ROBINSON**  
 DISTRICT 7

CONSENT CALENDAR  
 April 2, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Rigel Robinson, Mayor Jesse Arreguin, and  
 Councilmembers Kate Harrison and Lori Droste

Subject: Support for SCA-1: Public Housing Projects

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution supporting SCA-1, which repeals Article 34 of the state constitution, requiring a citywide vote for construction of publicly funded low income housing projects. Copies of the resolution will be sent to Senator Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, Senator Bill Allen, and Senator Scott Weiner.

BACKGROUND

On December 3, 2018, Senators Ben Allen and Scott Weiner introduced a bill to the state legislature repealing Article 34. Repealing this section would enable city and local governments to expedite the process of funding low-income housing projects, without the delays of electorate approval. Given the current shortage of affordable housing in California, SCA 1 would be a catalyst to much-needed development.

Article 34 defines “‘low rent housing project’ as any development composed of urban or rural dwellings, apartments or other living accommodations for persons of low income. ‘Person of low income’ shall mean persons or families who lack the amount of income which is necessary (as determined by the state public body developing, constructing, or acquiring the housing project) to enable them, without financial assistance, to live in decent, safe and sanitary dwellings, without overcrowding.”

Initially added to the Constitution in 1950 through a ballot initiative, Article 34 is a legislative relic of a racially discriminatory era, and institutes a disruptive obstacle to construction of new affordable public housing.

The attached resolution states the City of Berkeley’s endorsement of the proposed constitutional amendment. Copies of the resolution will be sent to Senator Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, and the bill’s authors, Senators Ben Allen and Scott Weiner.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Consistent with the City’s climate and environmental goals.

[Title of Report]

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CONTACT PERSON

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Ronit Sholkoff and Mars Svec-Burdick, Interns to Councilmember Rigel Robinson

Attachments:

1: Resolution in Support of SCA-1

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

ENDORSEMENT OF SCA-1 (2019)

WHEREAS, housing is a human right, and;

WHEREAS, development of publicly funded affordable housing enables cities to further the public good by expanding access to this basic right, and;

WHEREAS, under current law, the cumbersome requirement of electoral approval impedes the capacity of municipalities to develop adequate numbers of affordable housing units, and;

WHEREAS, restrictions on affordable housing reinforce intergenerational income inequality and perpetuate systems of economic disenfranchisement which disproportionately impact minority communities, and;

WHEREAS, construction of new affordable housing empowers cities to both correct historic inequalities and address contemporary shortages when they arise, and;

WHEREAS, SCA-1 (Allen and Weiner), also known as the Public Housing Projects Amendment, will repeal Article 34 of the California Constitution, thereby removing an antiquated procedural obstacle to progress.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley hereby endorses SCA-1 and the constitutional amendments which will result from its passage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley may be listed as a supporter of said constitutional amendments by the official proponents of the measure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution will be sent to Senator Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, Senator Bill Allen, and Senator Scott Weiner.

