



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

July 19, 2024

The Honorable Juan Carrillo
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 4320
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 2485 (Carrillo)—Regional Housing Need Determination

Dear Assemblymember Carrillo,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Long Beach (City) to express support for AB 2485, which seeks to ensure an accurate and transparent Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) determination.

Housing affordability remains a pressing challenge across the state, with many communities facing an acute shortage of housing supply. One important tool in addressing the state's housing crisis is ensuring that cities and counties appropriately plan for new housing. Such planning is required through the housing element of each community's General Plan, which outlines a long-term plan for meeting the community's existing and projected housing needs. It is essential to have robust mechanisms for determining regional housing needs that are grounded in accurate data and informed analysis. If a local Housing Element is based on an inaccurate RHNA determination, that could directly translate to housing units that are unaccounted for and thus remain unbuilt. AB 2485 would require the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to convene and engage stakeholders to consider improvements to the process of determining the existing and projected housing need for each region before finalizing these assessments for any region. However, this would only apply to the 8th and subsequent revisions of the housing element. Furthermore, AB 2485 would require HCD to establish and convene a panel of experts to advise the department on its assumptions, data, and analyses before making its final determination on a region.

Long Beach is proud of our efforts to attract and encourage housing development throughout the city. Long Beach was the first large jurisdiction in the SCAG region to have its 6th Cycle Housing Element Update certified by the HCD, in April 2022. We developed a roadmap for accommodating projected housing demand, increasing housing production, improving housing affordability, preserving existing affordable housing, improving housing conditions and tenant protections, and facilitating development of housing for all income levels. For these efforts, the City received the Comprehensive Plan (Large Jurisdiction) Award of Excellence from the American Planning Association, Los Angeles. The City was also recently recognized by the State as a local government agency that is committed to policies and practices that remove barriers to housing production, receiving the Prohousing Designation from HCD in July 2023.

The City supports efforts to reform the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. AB 2485 aims for transparency in the RHNA determination process by providing Council of Governments, housing stakeholders, members of the public, and all interested parties with information on the data sources, analyses, and calculation methods used by HCD.

For these reasons, the City supports AB 2485.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", written over a white background.

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 65th District
The Honorable Josh Lowenthal, State Assembly, 69th District

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