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May 7, 2021

Senator Anthony Portantino
Chair, Appropriations Committee
State Capitol Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 9

Dear Senator Portantino,

Since 1972, Allied Neighborhoods Association has worked to preserve the unique nature of Santa Barbara's location and architectural heritage as reflected in our neighborhoods. Representatives from our neighborhoods speak for thousands of residents and we are opposed to SB 9.

Certainly, there is a need for more housing—especially moderate income affordable housing (the "missing middle"). There is nothing in SB 9 that requires these new units to be affordable. Nor is there any data to prove that simply increasing density lowers housing costs, especially in high demand coastal cities.

Since our current 2015 Housing Element was adopted, the City has significantly increased new housing capacity through changes our multi-unit housing program, as well as State laws on ADUs. With ADU law, our single-family zoned areas allow multi-family housing and 3 units on each lot. ADU requirements and recent local zoning changes, are focused to hopefully provide the type of housing needed in Santa Barbara. At a recent meeting on RHNA goals, Santa Barbara city staff said we have sufficient zoning capacity to meet the upcoming requirements (Cycle 6, 2023-2031). And in addition, we are in the process of updating our multi-family housing program, to provide even more housing.

With SB 9, no accounting is made for the growing costs density brings to neighborhoods, such as heavier sewer flows and limited water resources. Environmental impacts usually protected by CEQA will be overlooked. In our high fire hazard zones, crowding narrow hillside streets will put more residents into even greater danger.

SB 9 will create very attractive opportunities for real estate developers. Gentrification will accelerate and low and middle-income renters will lose their housing and be unable to afford the newer units. Down the road, we will see our historic character disappear while infrastructure costs skyrockets.

Santa Barbara was among the first in the nation to establish exemplary city planning which has drawn international admiration. This bill takes away local control from capable hands who serve our community and robs us of our ability to handle our housing issues in ways specifically suited to our town and its needs.

The solutions set forth in SB 9 may be applicable in some cities of our State, yet not in Santa Barbara. One size does not fit all! We respectfully ask you to vote "NO" on SB 9.

Sincerely,

Allied Neighborhoods Association

Cc: Senator Monique Limon
Assemblyman Steve Bennett