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AB 1061: HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS

FACT SHEET



SUMMARY

AB 1061 removes barriers to housing development by allowing the California HOME Act (SB 9 of 2021) to apply in historic districts, as long as projects do not demolish existing historic structures. This change prevents the misuse of historic preservation laws to block new housing and expands opportunities for homeownership and multi-unit housing in more neighborhoods.

BACKGROUND

California faces a severe housing shortage, particularly for middle-income and small multi-family housing near jobs and transit. Restrictive zoning has made it illegal to build these types of homes in over 70% of the state, driving displacement and forcing Californians into severe rent burdens.

To address this, the California HOME Act (SB 9) became law in 2021, allowing homeowners to split their lots and build up to four homes where only one was previously allowed. This law promotes small-scale infill housing and increases affordability in historically exclusionary single-family neighborhoods.

Senate Bill (SB) 9, known as the California HOME Act, legalize and streamline the development of duplexes and small-scale lot-splits across California, including in historically exclusionary single-family neighborhoods. Small urban lot splits and the development of more duplexes adds additional density and lower-cost homes into existing residential neighborhoods, increasing housing abundance and affordability.

However, SB 9's exclusion of historic districts has created a loophole that opponents of new housing exploit to block development. Local groups frequently misuse historic preservation designations to prevent homeowners from using SB 9, significantly limiting the law's effectiveness. Early implementation data shows SB 9 has been severely underutilized, with this loophole being a key barrier to increasing housing production.

SOLUTION

AB 1061 ensures that the California HOME Act applies in historic districts while protecting historic structures. By allowing homeowners in these districts to build additional homes and duplexes, this bill increases housing opportunities without compromising historic preservation.

SUPPORT

- California YIMBY (Sponsor)

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