



MEMO TO: MEMBERS OF THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING COMMITTEE

FROM: AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER
 RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES OF CALIFORNIA
 LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES
 URBAN COUNTIES OF CALIFORNIA
 CALIFORNIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
 CALIFORNIA BUILDING OFFICIALS

DATE: JUNE 26, 2018

SUBJECT: OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED - AB 2913 (WOOD) – LENGTHY STATEWIDE BUILDING PERMIT
 EXTENSIONS FOR HOUSING PROJECTS – In Senate Transportation & Housing Committee – In
 Committee Tuesday, July 3rd

On behalf of the the American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA CALIFORNIA), Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), the League of California Cities (LCC), the Urban Counties of California (UCC), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the California Building Officials (CALBO), **our organizations have respectfully taken an oppose unless amended position on AB 2913.**

This bill, until January 1, 2024, would provide that a residential building permit would remain valid if the work on the site authorized by that permit is begun within 3 years after its issuance, rather than the existing 6 months. The bill, until January 1, 2024, would also authorize the building official to grant, in writing, one or more extensions of time for periods of not more than 180 days per extension upon a written request by the permittee that demonstrates justifiable cause for the extension.

Given the impacts of the devastating fires and floods last year, our organizations would support a temporary extension for residential building permits in those declared disaster areas. However, we cannot support a statewide building permit extension for housing projects.

This lengthy 3-year blanket building permit extension for the entire state – 6 times longer than the existing 6 month building permit - could result in sites remaining vacant for years. This is completely opposite of state and local goals to get housing projects built and available for buyers and renters as quickly as possible.

We understand that the author may be suggesting an amendment to reduce the initial length of the building permit to 18 months after issuance. But, this would still be 3 times longer than the existing building permits, meaning housing would take 3 times longer to get built and available to buy or rent than the current timeline.

It is also important to note that it is the project applicant that determines when the initial building permit is pulled – they can wait until they have their financing, contractors and building materials lined up. There is no deadline.

In addition, the existing California Building Code already authorizes the project applicant to request a time extension for a legitimate reason in Section 105.5, and those extensions are frequently approved by the building official. In fact, the bill should be amended to remove the sunset on the extension language currently in the bill to avoid eliminating this existing extension authorization in the CBC.



We also oppose proposed amendments to the bill that would mandate a 12-month extension at no cost to the applicant if construction has begun on even the last day of the initial permit, and an existing requirement in the bill that would require that building permits, once issued, would only need to comply with building standards in effect when the original permit was issued no matter how many extensions are granted. Tracking which building codes are applicable to which project at which time would be an administrative nightmare for cities and counties to track, and important code changes would for years would be ignored.

Finally, the author and supporters have suggested that the bill simply makes the building permit timeline for normal on-site residential building permits consistent with the permit timeline for manufactured housing. This is misleading and is not apples to apples. Although manufactured housing permits are three years, it is important to point out what the building permit for manufactured housing covers. The manufactured home structure does not require a building permit, only the foundation/slab, site utilities, and attachment of house to the foundation/slab. The first two happen before the house is delivered and the last one after it is delivered. That could cause a longer lag time than a site built house where everything is done as a single contract/project. Also, in new manufactured housing parks/subdivisions slabs and utilities might be installed in phases with the units installed as they are sold/leased often in partnership with the manufacturer. In addition, manufactured homes are not built on-site but somewhere else, and maybe not in California. They come to the site already built or in just a few pieces. And, it would be difficult for those manufacturers to take advantage of the extensions other builders receive because until they put the finished home on that slab, they are not physically present.

If the bill is amended to apply only to declared disaster areas for a limited amount of time, or to consider other options related to voluntary extensions, our organizations would support the bill.

For questions please contact Sande George, APA California, sgeorge@stefangeorge.com; Jason Rhine, League, jrhine@cacities.org; Chris Lee, clee@counties.org, CSAC; Tracy Rhine, RCRC, TRhine@rcrcnet.org; Jolena Voorhis, Urban Counties, Jolena@UrbanCounties.com; Katie Almand, kalmand@calbo.org.

cc: Governor's Office
Senate Housing & Transportation Committee
OPR
Republican Caucus