



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

April 1, 2020

The Honorable Miguel Santiago
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6027
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1907 (Santiago): CEQA: Emergency Shelters: Supportive and Affordable Housing: Exemption As Introduced on January 8, 2020 – Notice of Support

Dear Assembly Member Santiago:

On behalf of the Urban Counties of California (UCC), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA), we write in support of your bill, AB 1907, which would remove barriers to help accelerate the construction of desperately needed housing for families and individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless throughout California.

The state is facing an unprecedented housing and homelessness crisis. In 2019, the California Department of Housing and Community Development cited a need for more than 1.3 million housing units to be built within the next decade. Nearly one-third of all Californians are spending more than fifty percent of their income on housing costs. Our lack of affordable housing has also played a key role in our homelessness crisis. While California only has 12 percent of the nation's total population, we have about 25 percent of the total homeless population in the country or 150,000 people currently experiencing homelessness.

In 2019, AB 1197 (Santiago) laid the groundwork for expedited construction of supportive housing and emergency shelter projects in Los Angeles. AB 1197 is projected to save between 12 and 18 months for many projects, resulting in about \$2 billion in savings over the next five years. Not only is AB 1197 already saving time, but it is also saving money. This bill will build upon AB 1197's success and expand its scope statewide to include affordable housing, permanent supportive housing, and emergency shelters.

AB 1907 targets a narrow subset of affordable housing, those going to California's lowest-income households. Without compromising on California's values of environmental protection, public health and safety, AB 1907 can help relieve thousands of families and individuals from homelessness.

For these reasons, we support AB 1907. If you need additional information regarding our position on this measure, please do not hesitate to contact Jean Kinney Hurst of UCC at (916) 272-0010 or jkh@hbeadvocacy.com, Christopher Lee of CSAC at (916) 327-7500 or clee@counties.org, or Lauren De Valencia of APA California at (916) 443-5301 or lauren@stefangeorge.com.

Sincerely,



Jean Kinney Hurst
Legislative Representative
Urban Counties of California



Christopher Lee
Legislative Representative
California State Association of Counties



Eric Phillips
Vice President Policy and Legislation
APA California

Cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee
Members and Consultants, Assembly Natural Resources Committee