



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

April 12, 2023

The Honorable Senator Dave Cortese
1021 O Street, Room 6630
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: SB 406 (Cortese) California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): exemption: financial assistance: housing – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Cortese:

The American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA California) is pleased to **support** your SB 406, which would make clear that actions by local agencies to provide financial assistance or insurance to develop and build housing for low or moderate-income levels are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), if the actual project receiving the financial assistance or insurance is subject to review under CEQA. This is consistent with exemptions currently available to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the California Housing Finance Agency (CHFA).

APA California is a non-profit organization made up of practicing planners, citizens and public officials committed to advancing the practice of local, regional, and statewide planning throughout urban, suburban, and rural California. As adopted in APA California's Legislative Platform, *Plan California*, our organization is supportive of efforts that provide streamlining for housing, encouraging the use of CEQA solely for its intended purposes, while eliminating CEQA abuse.

Given that the action to finance a project could be interpreted as a discretionary review and therefore subject to CEQA, SB 406 would make clear that the financing action itself would not trigger CEQA, without changing requirements for actual project review. This is consistent with existing law that exempts HCD and CHFA actions related to financial assistance for affordable housing projects, and we believe extending this to local jurisdictions will help in expediting the process to develop more affordable housing.

For these reasons, APA California is pleased to support SB 406 and appreciates your efforts on this issue. If you have any questions, please contact Lauren De Valencia, Stefan/George Associates, APA California's lobbyist, at 916 443-5301, lauren@stefangeorge.com.

Sincerely,

Erik de Kok, AICP
Vice President Policy and Legislation
APA California

cc: Senate Housing Committee
Senate Republican Caucus
The Governor
The Office of Planning and Research

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Development

The Department of Housing and Community