



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Gail Pellerin
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Room 6310
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 996 (Pellerin) Public Resources: California Coastal Act of 1976: California Coastal Planning Fund: sea level rise plans – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Pellerin:

The American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA California) is pleased to support your AB 996, which would support the development of sea level rise plans along California's coast. AB 996 creates an early consultation process for local governments to engage with the California Coastal Commission and establish the California Coastal Planning Fund to leverage additional funding to carry out these planning efforts.

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 additional resources and funding for local evaluation and mitigation of hazards and risks associated with climate change

Under current law, the California Coastal Act of 1976 provides for the protection of coastal resources protection and public access under the oversight of the California Coastal Commission (Commission). In the coastal zone, the coastal cities and counties may develop a Local Coastal Plan (LCP), comprised of a Land Use Plan and Implementation Plan. In receiving certification from the Commission, the local government retains its permitting authority for coastal development permits (CDPs). In 2023, SB 272 (Laird) was chaptered into law, which requires local governments to develop sea level rise plans by 2034 and receive approval from the state in both the bay area and the coastal zone. For coastal jurisdictions, they will need to incorporate the sea level rise plan into their LCPs for approval by the Commission.

AB 996 would provide three supportive tools to ensure the development of sea level rise plans are completed. First, the bill would establish the California Coastal Planning Fund in the State Treasury to provide future state funding to support the development of these robust sea level rise plans. A portion of the fund would be set aside for the state to review and approve these plans. This workload is extremely valuable to ensure our coast is protected from sea level rise but is anticipated to be resource intensive for bay and coastal cities and counties and timely approval of these plans by the state is essential.

AB 996 would also create an early consultation process for local governments to engage and consult with the Commission about the preparation of new or amended LCPs. Early consultation is intended to provide enhanced coordination between the Commission and local governments, provides an opportunity for the Commission to make recommendations, and to ensure an efficient and timely submission and approval processes.

Lastly, the bill would provide that existing sea level rise information or plans that a local government has previously prepared may satisfy one or all of the components of the new sea level rise plan requirement. This importantly recognizes that local coastal governments have already done extensive work to assess sea level rise vulnerability and do not need to do duplicative planning. This provision aligns with the intent to also encourage early consultation to ensure timely compliance for sea level rise plan updates as part of the LCP certification process.



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For all the reasons listed above, are pleased to support AB 996 and we appreciate your efforts on this important issue. If you have any questions, please contact our lobbyist, Lauren De Valencia, with Stefan/George Associates at lauren@stefangeorge.com.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Reuben Duarte'.

Reuben Duarte
Vice President Policy and Legislation
APA California

cc: The Governor's Office
 The Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
 The California Department of Housing and Community Development