



American Planning Association  
**California Chapter**  
*Creating Great Communities for All*



March 19, 2026

The Honorable Pilar Schiavo  
California State Assembly  
1021 O Street, Room 4140  
Sacramento, California 95814

**SUBJECT: AB 1914 (Schiavo), General plan elements: childcare.  
Oppose Unless Amended (as introduced 2/12/26)**

Dear Assemblymember Schiavo,

The American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA California), the Rural Counties of California (RCRC) and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) must respectfully oppose AB 1914 unless amended to address several implementation concerns. As introduced, AB 1914 would require a local jurisdiction, upon the next update of two or more elements of the general plan on or after January 1, 2028, to review and update the land use, circulation, housing, safety, and environmental justice elements—and any other element, where appropriate—to address the childcare needs of the jurisdiction.

RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors for each of those member counties. CSAC represents all 58 counties in the state. 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 California.

As reflected in the APA California Legislative Platform, Plan California, we support thoughtful, comprehensive planning that promotes public health and safety, environmental sustainability, and resilient communities. However, APA California has growing concerns with the increasing number of General Plan mandates adopted in recent years for specific issues that may be more effectively addressed through other planning and regulatory tools.

Planners and Local Governments recognize the importance of expanding access to childcare and have supported the Legislature's efforts to remove barriers to childcare providers. However, it is unclear what additional barriers a General Plan update would resolve. General Plans are long-range policy documents intended to provide high-level guidance and are not designed to be amended frequently. Instead, ordinances, zoning codes, and implementation programs are the



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tools through which specific uses and regulatory changes are addressed. Simply put, not every issue is best addressed through the General Plan.

### **Existing Regulatory Relief for Childcare Facilities**

California law already treats small and large licensed family childcare homes as residential uses permitted by right for zoning purposes. Recent legislation has further reduced barriers by limiting fees, expanding by-right permitting for certain childcare facilities, and providing targeted CEQA exemptions. APA California and Counties supported these efforts and continues to support their effective implementation. These types of targeted reforms provide a more direct and effective pathway for expanding childcare facilities than a broad General Plan mandate.

### **General Plan Updates Not Always the Right Tool**

AB 1914 would require cities and counties to undertake a substantial, multi-element update to their General Plans—effectively requiring revisions to at least five of the seven mandatory elements. The issue is not whether childcare is important—it is whether the General Plan mandate is the appropriate mechanism to deliver it.

While General Plans can establish policies and goals, they do not directly result in childcare facility development. Instead, facility delivery is driven by implementation programs, licensing, financing, and site-specific feasibility. As proposed, the bill risks creating a significant planning exercise without addressing the core barriers to expanding childcare capacity.

APA California is happy to work with you on alternative approaches that provide greater flexibility to jurisdictions while more directly supporting childcare development. Tools such as specific plans, targeted ordinances, technical assistance, and continued streamlining of permitting and licensing processes would better align with the bill's intent and allow for more timely implementation.

### **Lack of Resources and Cumulative Mandates**

Local jurisdictions are already working to implement a growing number of state-mandated planning requirements. Many lack the staffing and financial resources needed to keep pace with these cumulative obligations. AB 1914 explicitly provides that no reimbursement is required for the new duties imposed on local agencies, creating a significant unfunded mandate.

This will require substantial staff time, public process, and technical analysis, potentially diverting limited resources away from implementation-focused efforts that more directly support



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childcare providers. While jurisdictions may impose fees to offset costs, it can take years to recover those expenses, and such fees may conflict with broader legislative concerns about development costs. In a challenging fiscal environment for both the state and local governments, we urge the Legislature to consider more flexible and implementable approaches that account for local capacity constraints.

APA California, RCRC and CSAC remain committed to working collaboratively with the author and Legislature to advance effective and implementable childcare policies. However, without amendments to address the concerns outlined above, we must respectfully oppose AB 1914. If you have any questions, please contact Lauren De Valencia, Stefan/George Associates, APA California's lobbyist, at 916 443-5301, [lauren@stefangeorge.com](mailto:lauren@stefangeorge.com), Tracy Rhine for RCRC at [trhine@rcrcny.org](mailto:trhine@rcrcny.org) or Mark Neuburger with CSAC at [mneuburger@counties.org](mailto:mneuburger@counties.org).

Sincerely,

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CSAC

cc: Members and Consultant, Assembly Local Government Committee  
Members and Consultant, Assembly Human Services Committee  
Assembly Republican Caucus  
The Governor's Office  
The Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation



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