



April 6, 2018

The Honorable Phil Ting
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for AB 2065 (Ting)

Dear Assemblymember Ting,

Rise Together strongly supports AB 2065, which clarifies California's Surplus Lands Act to provide for more efficient distribution of surplus land and increase our communities' supply of affordable housing.

Rise Together is a multi-sector initiative to disrupt the cycle of poverty by advancing equity and shared prosperity for all. We're leveraging the power of 9 Bay Area counties to create economic opportunity and prosperity for all through collective learning and action, shifting systems that are no longer working and redefining what is possible for Bay Area residents.

AB 2065 supports affordable housing and advances California's environmental and economic goals

California is facing an affordable housing emergency, exacerbated by the loss of tools such as redevelopment funding, the exhaustion of voter-approved affordable housing funds, and sharp reductions in federal housing assistance.

Redevelopment of unused public land (surplus lands) can support affordable housing development throughout the state and advance California's environmental and economic goals by increasing affordable infill development near transit and jobs.

AB 2065 is a critical, clarifying fix for existing state law

While existing law (California's Surplus Land Act) requires all local agencies to prioritize affordable housing, parks, and open space when disposing of surplus land, many local agencies have attempted to circumvent both the letter and the intent of the law, resulting in conflicts and delays that have reduced our state's ability to generate badly-needed affordable housing in our communities.

AB 2065 builds on the changes championed in 2014 through AB 2135, to bring greater clarity and provide for more efficient distribution of surplus land to increase the supply of affordable housing by amending California's Surplus Land Act. AB 2065 will:

- Provide clarity about which agencies are covered by the law;
- Better define "surplus" land as any publicly-owned land not needed for the public agency's own governmental operations and establish a presumption that public land is "surplus property" when the public entity initiates action to dispose of it;
- Streamline the process for notifying qualified affordable housing developers of the availability of public land;
- Clarify what it means to grant "priority" to affordable housing proposals by requiring that agencies negotiate exclusively with the entity proposing the most units at the deepest affordability;
- Specify that negotiations shall focus on sales or lease price and terms and not the details of how the property shall be developed (which is governed by local land use and zoning regulations);
- Clarify that the existing 15% minimum affordability requirement applies whenever surplus public land is used for housing development.

AB 2065 is a critical step in addressing our housing crisis

Surplus lands are a vital resource for California to support more affordable housing opportunities for our seniors, veterans, and vulnerable community members. AB 2065 is a critical step the State can take now to ensure we are prioritizing this important resource, as we work to address California's housing emergency.

Thank you for your leadership in drafting legislation to support affordable housing and advance California's environmental and economic goals. As a collective impact initiative to cut poverty in the Bay Area and as a partner of the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH), we look forward to working with you to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Megan Joseph, MA
Executive Director
Rise Together