

California Legislature Releases Sweeping Bill Package to Fast Track Housing Production

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SACRAMENTO – In a unified effort to tackle California's housing crisis, a bipartisan and bicameral group of legislators today unveiled the Fast Track Housing package — a suite of more than 20 bills aimed at making housing more affordable by slashing red tape, removing uncertainty, and drastically diminishing the time it takes to get new housing approved and built. This package builds off the recommendations in the [Final Report](#) of the Select Committee on Permitting Reform, chaired by Asm. Wicks.

Speaking from the Governor's Press Room, Assemblymembers Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland), Matt Haney (D-San Francisco), Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood), Juan Carrillo (D-Palmdale), Josh Hoover (R-Folsom), David Alvarez (D-San Diego), Senator Tim Grayson (D-Concord) and Alex Fisch (Special Assistant to Attorney General Rob Bonta) laid out a bold vision to improve efficiency in the housing approval process — from application to final inspection — without compromising environmental or safety standards.

"Right now, it takes far too long to build the housing Californians need — and that's a failure of government," said **Assemblymember Wicks**. "The Fast Track Housing package is about making our systems work better: clearer rules, faster timelines, and fewer bureaucratic hoops. It's not about cutting corners — it's about being honest that what we're doing isn't working. This package reflects a broad, bipartisan commitment to saying yes to housing, yes to progress, and yes to a government that helps solve problems instead of creating them."

California is facing a staggering housing crisis, with a shortfall of 2.5 million homes and nearly 200,000 individuals experiencing homelessness. Eighty percent of low-income households are burdened by rent costs, and are often forced to choose between maintaining stable housing and covering other basic necessities. For most Californians, homeownership remains out of reach.

To confront these challenges head-on, lawmakers are zeroing in on the systemic delays that continue to stall progress on housing development. The Fast Track Housing package focuses on streamlining the processes that have made it so difficult to build housing at the scale and speed California needs.

The package targets the five key bottlenecks that delay housing development: application, CEQA compliance, entitlement, post-entitlement, and enforcement. By addressing inefficiencies at every step, lawmakers aim to reduce project timelines, cut costs, and get shovels in the ground faster.

The package also introduces significant reforms to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), aiming to exempt environmentally friendly housing projects from lengthy reviews. This move, backed by environmental and housing advocates alike, is central to Assemblymember Wicks' AB 609.

A full livestream of the press conference can be accessed at <https://a14.asmdc.org/>.

Included below is a list of statements from Fast Track Housing bill authors, and an overview of all the bills in the Fast Track Housing Package. Fact sheets for each of the bills will be added to the package [Dropbox folder](#) as they become available.

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What Fast Track Housing Bill Authors/Sponsors Are Saying:

“Californians have made clear that they want their elected officials to be laser-focused on affordability issues. Housing affordability in particular is a top concern, and my office is committed to tackling this challenge head-on. Right now, several ambiguities in housing element law are holding us back. With SB 786, local governments and builders would have additional clarity, allowing us to build much-needed housing faster.” — **Attorney General Rob Bonta**

“When it comes to building things, California has gotten very good at getting in our own way. We've added layers and layers of process and complexity over the past few decades, including CEQA, the law that swallowed California. The result is an extreme housing shortage driving the affordability crisis we see today. To address our housing shortage and bring costs down, we must right the ship by making our overgrown permitting processes usable again. I'm grateful to have a fearless partner in Assemblymember Wicks, whose tremendous leadership brought us this urgently needed reform package.” — **Senator Scott Wiener**

“We desperately need permitting reform to create clear, consistent standards so that housing projects can move forward efficiently. If we are serious about addressing our housing crisis, we must make it much easier to get to ‘yes’ on housing.” — **Assemblymember Matt Haney, Chair of the Assembly Housing Committee**

“A few years ago, when asked about my pro-housing work, I said ‘I am not here for the bullshit – I am here to build housing.’ Well, years later and both statements remain true. I am still not here for the bullshit – and I am still here to build housing. As we have learned from the Legislature's past work and the incredible package of pro-housing bills being discussed today, there is not one solution to fix California's housing crisis. And that is ok. Because standing with my colleagues and incredible pro-housing advocates, I know that together, we will solve California's housing crisis.” — **Assemblymember Tina McKinnor, Chair of the Los Angeles Legislative Delegation**

“The Fast Track Housing Package will resolve convoluted permitting regulations that undermine our ability to make California more affordable. I am excited to partner with my colleagues in this bipartisan package that will make it easier for project applicants and local governments to navigate and enforce regulations, helping California move forward.” — **Senator Jesse Arreguin**

“California's housing crisis demands bold solutions — and that starts with fixing our broken entitlement process. Right now, delays and inconsistent rules are driving up costs and stalling projects before they begin. By reforming this process, we can create a more predictable path for housing development that lowers costs, speeds up construction, expands affordable housing and homeownership, and supports sustainable, community-focused growth. I'm committed to getting this done right.” — **Assemblymember Juan Carrillo, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Local Government**

“Our state must do more to lower the cost of housing for California families. We can start by reducing barriers to the current residential permitting process. AB 1308 helps do this in a bipartisan way by holding local municipalities accountable for more timely home inspections.” — **Assemblymember Josh Hoover**

“We cannot solve California's housing crisis while allowing bureaucratic delay and legal loopholes to undermine the construction of homes. This package ensures that state-certified housing plans carry real legal weight and that critical housing — especially for students and working families — is not trapped in procedural limbo.” — **Assemblymember David Alvarez**

Overview of Bills in the Fast Track Housing Package: The package is organized into five different sections that represent the life cycle of housing production – from the first to the last time a project engages with government.

Application: The process of getting the housing project “in the door” to be reviewed by the local government.

- AB 1294 (Haney): Establishes a statewide uniform application for housing projects that are compliant with local laws, creating consistency across jurisdictions and ending the practice of some jurisdictions dissuading projects from even applying by asking for costly and unnecessary studies and materials. Sponsored by Abundant Housing LA.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The process of analyzing how the housing project affects the environment.

- AB 609 (Wicks): Creates an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for housing projects that are compliant with local laws and in environmentally friendly locations, thereby greatly reducing risks and increasing feasibility for these projects. Sponsored by CA YIMBY and Bay Area Council.
- SB 607 (Wiener): Incorporates several important reforms to CEQA that would benefit housing projects, including focusing analysis, expanding exemptions, and strengthening the determinations of lead agencies to allow exemptions. Sponsored by Bay Area Council, Housing Action Coalition, Rural County Representative of California, and Prosperity CA.

Entitlement: The process of getting the project approved for construction by the local government.

- AB 357 (Alvarez): Exempts student housing developed by a public institution of higher education or a qualified nonprofit from review by the Coastal Commission, allowing California's colleges to build student housing more efficiently and affordably. Sponsored by the Student Homes Coalition and UC Student Association.
- AB 920 (Caloza): Requires larger cities to have a centralized application portal for all permits across departments and allow tracking in real time of applications. Sponsored by Abundant Housing LA.
- AB 961 (Avila Farias): Extends the sunset for the successful "California Land Recycling and Reuse Act of 2004" (CLRRA), which provides liability protections to promote the cleanup and redevelopment of blighted contaminated properties. Sponsored by the Bay Area Council.
- AB 1007 (Rubio): Expedites the approval of housing by shortening the time frame for state and regional agencies to approve or disapprove applications for housing development projects for which they are a responsible agency, but not the lead agency. Sponsored by CBIA.
- AB 1276 (Carrillo): Increases certainty for housing developers by locking in the rules at the time of application with regards to regulations and requirements made by state and regional agencies, and requires those agencies to use a "reasonable person" standard when they are considering whether a housing project is consistent with an applicable regulatory plan. Sponsored by CBIA.
- SB 328 (Grayson): Expedites the remediation and reuse of contaminated sites by placing timelines on the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) to respond to permit requests for housing projects, and caps their fees for reviewing the remediation of sites that were not contaminated by the project sponsor. Sponsored by the Housing Action Coalition and SPUR.
- SB 489 (Arreguin): Plugs gaps in the permitting process by requiring state and regional agencies to post their application requirements online, and by ensuring that all decisions are either covered by the "shot clocks" included in the Permit Streamlining Act or post-entitlement permit statutes." Sponsored by CBIA.
- SB 677 (Wiener): Improves the efficacy of two major housing bills, including removing provisions that have hampered the uptake of the by right duplex and lot-splitting provisions of SB 9 (Atkins, 2021) and increasing the feasibility of projects subject to the by right provisions of SB 35 (Wiener, 2017). Sponsored by CA YIMBY, the Housing Action Coalition, and LISC-SD.

Post-Entitlement: The process of pulling together the permits necessary to actually build the housing, including demolition, grading, and building permits.

- AB 557 (McKinnor): Facilitates cost-savings by removing local inspections on factory-built housing that is already inspected by the State. Sponsored by SoLA Impact.
- AB 660 (Wilson): Expedites the post-entitlement process by allowing third-party review of building permits if they are not reviewed by the local agency in a timely way. Sponsored by CBIA.
- AB 782 (Quirk-Silva): Eliminates unnecessary costs and delays by prohibiting local governments from requiring bonding or other financial assurances related to

subdivision improvements that will be privately owned and maintained. Sponsored by CBIA.

- AB 818 (Avila Farias): Facilitates the rapid rebuilding and repairing of housing affected by natural disasters by expediting its entitlement and post-entitlement permits and waiving fees. Author-sponsored.
- AB 1026 (Wilson): Removes a major source of uncertainty from the development process by requiring investor-owned utilities to follow the same rules as local governments in reviewing and approving post-entitlement permits. Sponsored by the Housing Action Coalition.
- AB 1206 (Harabedian): Reduces costs by requiring cities to expedite the building permit approval for housing projects whose plans they have previously approved. Author-sponsored.
- AB 1308 (Hoover): Expedites the post-entitlement process by requiring building departments to provide an estimated timeframe for building permit inspections, and allows applicants to contract with private professional providers to undertake the inspection. Sponsored by CA YIMBY.

Legal Rights and Enforcement: The part of the process where the laws are interpreted and the rights of all parties are upheld.

- AB 610 (Alvarez): Ensures that local governments do not make it more difficult to build housing by precluding the adoption of stricter local regulations unless previously contemplated in the local Housing Element. Sponsored by CBIA and SPUR.
- AB 712 (Wicks): Facilitates the enforcement of housing laws by increasing penalties for local and state agencies that violate housing statutes, in a manner in keeping with existing law in the Housing Accountability Act. Sponsored by CBIA.
- AB 1050 (Schultz): Helps unlock the redevelopment of underutilized commercial sites by prohibiting private reciprocal easement agreements from prohibiting housing if the site is already zoned for housing. Sponsored by SPUR.
- SB 786 (Arreguin): Resolves multiple ambiguities in housing element law to provide clarity for local governments, project applicants, and courts. Sponsored by Attorney General Rob Bonta.

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