

TO: SOUTH BAY CITIES COG BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FR: JEFF KIERNAN, LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES
RE: CAL CITIES UPDATE FOR 5/22/2025 MEETING

ADVOCACY UPDATE

In May, Cal Cities welcomed a record number of local officials to Sacramento to be part of the City Leaders Summit (CLS) educational conference and advocacy trip. During the three day event, city officials or staff representatives met with all 120 legislative offices to advocate for [Cal Cities legislative priorities](#), inform legislators on the results of our [Annual Homelessness Survey](#), and address any individual city concerns directly with legislators.

The CLS advocacy trip takes place during a busy time in Sacramento, with several legislative deadlines looming, including the deadline for fiscal and non-fiscal bills to pass out of committees in their first house. Deadlines for fiscal bills to clear the dual appropriations committees is next on May 23 and then June 6 is the deadline for legislation to cross over to the second house or be stalled until 2026. Cal Cities also recently [hosted a webinar](#) to help inform our members about the fate of hundreds of bills – including many priority bills for Cal Cities – that will be voted on in the appropriations committees on May 23.

[Early action by Cal Cities members](#) stalled two housing bills that would preempt local land use authority: [AB 647 \(Gonzalez, M.\)](#) and [SB 677 \(Wiener\)](#). AB 647 would have required local governments to ministerially approve up to 8 residential housing units in virtually all single-family zones so long as one unit was affordable, while SB 677 would have significantly expanded SB 9 (Atkins, 2021) and eliminated local governments' ability to collect impact fees on those projects. Both measures failed to make it out of legislative policy committees and are now stalled until next year.

Last week, Governor Newsom made news in [an interview with the New York Times](#) when he called on cities and counties to adopt ordinances that restrict encampments on public property and provided a "model ordinance" that lays out what he'd like to see included in those bans. The Governor also announced the release of an additional \$3 billion in Prop 1 funds in this same article. [In response to the Governor's announcement](#), Cal Cities renewed our call for funding to address homelessness, not just model ordinances, while noting that 80% of cities already have ordinances like these in place and, of those, 40% had recently been updated after the Governor's executive order on this same subject last July. While Cal Cities is pleased that the Governor has made \$3 billion in Prop 1 funds available, these dollars – voted in by Californians in March 2024 for the construction of mental health facilities and supportive housing – *cannot be used to enforce the encampment clean-up ordinances*.

Finally, the Governor also announced his May Revise to the State Budget on May 14 with a projection of a \$16 billion dollar deficit that the Governor blames on President Trump's tariff and economic policies. Cal Cities lobbying team prepared a quick summary of the budget for our members that can be found [HERE](#).

UPDATE ON CAL CITIES ACTION ALERTS

Cal Cities issued Action Alerts requesting urgent action from our members on several pieces of legislation, including:

1. AB 647 (Gonzalez) Housing Development Approvals: Residential Units – OPPOSE

Forces cities to allow up to eight housing units — only one of which is required to be affordable — on lots with an existing single-family home or in an area zoned for eight units or less, without any environmental review or public input.

Status: Hearing in Assembly Local Government committee cancelled at the request of the author – now a two-year bill

2. SB 79 (Wiener) Transit Orientated Development - OPPOSE

This measure would require cities to approve higher-density residential projects up to 7 stories near public transit stops ministerially regardless of local zoning codes, limit the use of local development standards on the proposed project, and allow transit agencies full land authority over residential and commercial development on property they own or lease.

Status: In Senate Appropriations, must pass by May 23 or become a two-year bill

3. SB 634 (Pérez) Homelessness: civil and criminal penalties - ~~OPPOSE~~ NEUTRAL

As introduced, this bill would have severely limited cities' ability to respond to the growing homelessness crisis in communities across California by prohibiting local governments from adopting any regulation, policy, or guidance that imposes civil or criminal penalties on a person experiencing homelessness.

Status: Cal Cities has removed our opposition to SB 634 after meeting with Senator Pérez and seeing new amendments in print that clarify that this measure seeks only to prevent local governments from criminalizing providing food or services to homeless individuals.

4. AB 650 (Papan) Planning and Zoning: Housing Element: RHNA – SPONSOR / SUPPORT

This bill would allow local governments to begin the housing element update process six months earlier, provide greater certainty and reduce ambiguity in the housing element review process, and ensure that local governments have adequate time to respond to the California Department of Housing and Community Development's (HCD) review letters.

Status: Assembly Appropriations, must pass by May 23 or become a two-year bill

UPCOMING EVENTS

- [June 5 from 6 – 8:30 PM: Los Angeles County Division General Membership meeting \(USC Hotel\).](#) Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara will provide an update on the California Department of Insurance's partnership initiatives and their efforts to support the region as it navigates insurance issues after the fires in Los Angeles County. In addition, members will cast a vote on the [Division's 2025 Budget](#) and the Division's Nominating Committee Report which will affirm the selection of our 2025-26 Division Board of Directors in advance of the August Installation. [Register Now.](#)
- [August 7 from 6 – 8:30 PM: Los Angeles County Division Installation & Dinner \(Palos Verdes Estates\)](#)
- [Save the Date! October 8 – 10 in Long Beach: The League of California Cities Annual Conference and Expo.](#) Registration to open in early June ([Long Beach Convention Center](#))