



# Senator Sydney K. Kamlager (District 30)

## SB 679: L.A. County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency

### IN BRIEF

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SB 679 creates the L.A. County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency: a single affordable housing solutions agency in Los Angeles County with the ability to raise its own public and private revenue to fund systemic solutions to the countywide affordable housing crisis, including 100% affordable housing and renter protection programs.

### BACKGROUND & PROBLEM

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Housing for low-income people across L.A. County is severely overcrowded, racially segregated, and often not linked to high quality resources like transit, jobs, schools or parks. The COVID-19 pandemic has made even clearer what we already knew to be true: our Black, Latino, and low-income communities are being forced to make untenable choices in where and how they live. 79% of Extremely Low-Income households in L.A. County are paying more than half of their income on housing costs compared to just 3% of moderate-income households.

Through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process, the Southern California Association of Governments has instructed the governments within L.A. County to plan for 341,000 homes by 2029 that are affordable to very low-income (<50% of the Area Median Income) and low-income (50 – 80% of the Area Median Income) households. If current production rates continue, we'd create just 25,000 of these units. Creating housing that is affordable to people who are deeply low-income is a key driver of our homelessness crisis and a challenge to governments across the country have struggled with.

The housing crisis in L.A. County is regional in nature and too great to be addressed individually by the county's 88 incorporated cities, especially in the context of ambitious RHNA goals. However, the current process is anything but regional: instead, each city and the county is each responsible for their own decisions around affordable housing financing and other protection programs.

L.A. County needs a comprehensive countywide approach to protecting, preserving and creating housing

that working and low-income people can access and afford. We need large systemic change that maximizes the scale and strength of L.A. County to push it toward its ambitious RHNA goals. It's also critical that we scale up key renter supports and protections across the county, including proven strategies like a right to counsel for renters.

### SOLUTION

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Inspired by previous Bay Area focused legislation, SB 679 creates a single, unified approach to addressing housing instability in L.A. County: a large-scale countywide affordable housing production strategy, combined with proven renter support programs like an emergency rent relief funding source and establishing a robust countywide right to counsel.

The L.A. County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency – with the ability to raise its own revenue and fund systemic solutions to the countywide affordable housing crisis, both through a dedicated local revenue source, as well as through other creative non-tax strategies, like mortgage revenue bonds – must be additive to existing efforts. Specifically, this bill will authorize the Agency to issue bonds and raise revenue through the parcel tax, gross receipts business license tax, or a documentary transfer tax by placing a measure on the countywide ballot. At least 50% of the revenues generated must be spent on new affordable housing construction, preservation, and ownership for specified low-income residents (earning less than 80% of area median income, with additional set asides for very low-income and extremely low-income residents); 30% to 40% for renter protection and support programs; and no more than 10% on administration and operations.

The bill also establishes a citizens' oversight committee composed of nine voting members with expertise in affordable housing finance and development, tenant protection, and housing preservation. This independent committee will promote transparency and fidelity to the agency's mission and vision.

SB 679 offers a comprehensive way forward for creating housing affordability across the county, reflecting leaders, viewpoints, and concerns from across the county. It is also critical that this agency focuses on

households that make an average salary or below, in particular extremely and deeply low-income people, as they are most impacted by the housing crisis.

Combining this focused approach on affordable housing production with coordinated and standardized renter support and protections, SB 679 is the type of ambitious thinking needed to create the future L.A. County we all want to see.

## **SUPPORT**

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Abundant Housing L.A.  
Active SGV  
Alliance for Community Transit – Los Angeles  
Alliance for Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) Action  
Ascencia  
Central City Association of Los Angeles  
Chrysalis  
Climate Resolve  
Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County  
Dignity and Power Now  
Disability Community Resource Center  
Downtown Women’s Center  
Ground Game LA  
I Did Something Good Today Foundation  
Imagine L.A.  
Inclusive Action for the City  
Inner City Law Center  
Interfaith Solidarity Network  
Justice L.A.  
KIWA  
LA Christian Health Center  
LA Community Action Network  
LA Family Housing  
LA Forward  
LA LGBT Center  
LA Voice  
Pacific Urbanism  
PATH, PATH Ventures  
Presbytery of the Pacific  
Public Counsel  
Safe Place for Youth  
SEIU California  
Skid Row Housing Trust  
St. Joseph Center  
State Building and Construction Trades Council  
Stories From the Frontline  
Strategic Actions For a Just Economy  
T.R.U.S.T. South LA  
The Center in Hollywood  
The People Concern

Union Station Homeless Services  
Unite Here Local 11  
United Way of Greater Los Angeles  
Valley Beth Shalom- Homelessness Task Force  
Venice Community Housing

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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