



OFFICE OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER

Marc Levine

TENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 1537: Refining the Definition of Suburban Counties for Default Housing Density

SUMMARY

AB 1537 would refine the definition of “suburban” for purposes of a county default housing density.

EXISTING LAW/BACKGROUND

In 2004, AB 2348 (Mullin Chapter 724) created a streamlined process for a city or county to receive approval of their housing element by establishing a default density for housing development.

Under AB 2348, a counties default density is based on a designation as metropolitan, suburban, or rural. This designation is determined by a formula that is in part dependent on the population of the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) where the county is located. The existing formula, while generally an appropriate tool across the state, has caused some counties with low population densities that are close to large population centers to be defined as metropolitan.

In some instances a low population, low density county has been designated as metropolitan, creating a deterrent to housing development. The hurdle has hinged on the metropolitan designation necessitating the development of multi-story apartment buildings that are out of character with the community.

THIS BILL

AB 1537 will refine the default density housing formula to allow for an appropriate suburban designation in the lower population counties of Marin, Yolo, El Dorado, and Placer. This refinement will help create momentum for more affordable housing development in counties that have had challenges in getting projects off the ground.

SUPPORT

County of Marin
Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)
Bridge Housing
Eden Housing
EAH Housing
Center for Sustainable Neighborhoods

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