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August 25, 2021

The Honorable Anthony Rendon  
Speaker, State Assembly  
State Capitol Building, Room 219  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Marie Waldron  
Republican Leader, State Assembly  
State Capitol Building, Room 3104  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 9 (Atkins) Increased Density in Single-Family Zones  
Oppose (As Amended 08/16/2021)**

Dear Speaker Rendon,

The City of Arcata writes to express our opposition to SB 9 (Atkins). SB 9 would require cities and counties to ministerially approve, without condition or discretion, a housing development containing two residential units on an individual parcel in single-family zones. Additionally, this measure would require local governments to ministerially approve an urban lot split, thus creating two independent lots that may be sold separately.

Housing affordability and homelessness are among the most critical issues facing California cities. Affordably priced homes are out of reach for many people and housing is not being built fast enough to meet the current or projected needs of people living in the state. Cities lay the groundwork for housing production by planning and zoning new projects in their communities based on extensive public input and engagement, state housing laws, and the needs of the building industry.

While the City of Arcata appreciates President pro Tempore Atkins' desire to pursue a housing production proposal, as currently drafted, SB 9 will not spur much-needed housing construction in a manner that supports local flexibility, decision making, and community input. State-driven ministerial or by-right housing approval processes fail to recognize the extensive public engagement associated with developing and adopting zoning ordinances and housing elements that are certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Specifically, the City of Arcata is pushing the boundaries of zoning and allowable, by right, development in areas that have high potential for redevelopment. Uncontrolled growth beyond the already very progressive zoning and land use approaches the City is currently developing could push our infrastructure beyond capacity. Furthermore, some neighborhoods are well suited to densification. Some are not. One neighborhood in Arcata was developed with a density at or above the carrying capacity of the land. If those parcels are not exempted from the provisions of SB 9, the quality of life in this

neighborhood, which is already predominately tenant occupied, would drop. Instead of creating more quality affordable housing, SB 9 has the potential to create blight.

California cities are committed to being part of the solution to the housing shortfall across all income levels and will continue to work collaboratively with you, the author, and other stakeholders on legislative proposals that will actually spur much-needed housing construction.

For these reasons, the City of Arcata opposes SB 9 (Atkins).

Respectfully,



Brett Watson, Mayor  
City of Arcata

cc:

The Honorable Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins, [Senator.Atkins@senate.ca.gov](mailto:Senator.Atkins@senate.ca.gov)

Senator Mike McGuire, [Senator.McGuire@senate.ca.gov](mailto:Senator.McGuire@senate.ca.gov) & VIA FAX: (916) 651-4902

Congressman Jared Huffman, [John.Driscoll@mail.house.gov](mailto:John.Driscoll@mail.house.gov)

Assembly Member Jim Wood, [Ruth.Valenzuela@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Ruth.Valenzuela@asm.ca.gov) & VIA FAX: (707) 445-6607 & (916) 319-2102

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