



736 F Street
Arcata, CA 95521

City Manager (707) 822-5953	Police 822-2428	Recreation 822-7091
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7/3/2025

The Honorable Lori Wilson
Chair, Assembly Committee on Transportation
1020 N Street, Suite 112
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 445 (Wiener) Transportation Projects: Permitting.
Notice of OPPOSITION (As amended 6/30/2025)

Dear Chair Wilson,

The City of Arcata **regretfully must oppose SB 445 (Wiener)**, which seeks to create a new state permitting scheme for local projects that ultimately introduces sweeping and problematic changes that would significantly impair local government's ability to manage public infrastructure, ensure worker and public safety, and coordinate fairly across all critical infrastructure sectors.

SB 445 proposes to drastically alter existing approval and coordination processes by imposing highly prescriptive and impractical timeframes that do not reflect the complexity of infrastructure coordination, environmental review, and public engagement necessary for responsible project delivery. Failure to meet notification and review deadlines results in automatic default decisions, potentially ignoring broader infrastructure impacts or unresolved technical issues. The process removes discretion from local agencies, handing decision-making power to the project proponent and California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) via an unknown arbitrator (whose decision is immune against any appeals process), regardless of local objections or infrastructure risks. This shift effectively sidelines cities in the planning and delivery of infrastructure projects within their own jurisdictions. The result is a near-total erosion of local control over assets we are obligated to maintain and steward on behalf of our communities.

Most concerning, the bill appears to grant project proponents — public or private — total authority to move forward with projects that could significantly alter or relocate critical infrastructure such as water, wastewater, and power systems, within the public right of way, without meaningful consultation or resolution with the affected city. This undermines essential protections for worker safety, service continuity, and environmental integrity.

While we appreciate the desire to expedite certain infrastructure projects, we cannot support legislation that sacrifices thoughtful planning, public safety, and equitable infrastructure prioritization in the name of speed. SB 445, in its current form, is unworkable and sets a dangerous precedent for undermining local authority and infrastructure integrity.

The City of Arcata has made a concerted effort to improve our streets to accommodate the needs of all users and has made specific improvements to support new low-income housing projects within our city. Arcata is one of the few cities in the state that has met or exceeded its low, and very low housing targets, and taking local control of our roadways, and establishing priorities without city control will do more to jeopardize the type of development the legislation seeks to encourage. The city needs to retain the authority to manage and expand its infrastructure in a manner that meets the needs of the city and without damaging the delicate balance we have between prioritizing projects and staying within our available budgets.

The City of Arcata strongly oppose the proposed legislation in SB445 developed by Senator Wiener.

We urge you to make **SB 445 a two-year bill** and work with local governments to craft solutions that balance the need for sustainable transportation improvements with the complex realities of infrastructure coordination and community impact.

The City of Arcata strongly oppose the proposed legislation in SB445 developed by Senator Wiener.

Sincerely,



Alexandra Stillman
Mayor
City of Arcata

cc. The Honorable Scott Wiener
Your Senator & Assembly Member
Your League Regional Public Affairs Manager (via email)
League of California Cities, cityletters@cacities.org