

Date of Hearing: April 22, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Matt Haney, Chair

AB 2094 (Harabedian) – As Amended April 8, 2026

SUBJECT: Social Housing Strategy and Implementation Program

SUMMARY: Establishes the Social Housing Strategy and Implementation Program and requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to establish a dedicated social housing coordinator to lead social housing strategy and implementation. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Includes the following definitions:
 - a) “income levels” includes all of the acutely low income households, extremely low income households, persons and families of low or moderate income, and very low income households;
 - b) “Housing pilot project” means housing developed satisfies all of the following:
 - i) Is owned by a public entity;
 - ii) Provides housing for rent that is affordable to a mix of household income levels; and
 - iii) Preserves long-term affordability.
- 1) Requires HCD to establish a dedicated social housing coordinator to lead social housing strategy and implementation.
- 2) Requires the social housing coordinator to do all of the following:
 - a) Produce a statewide scaling plan that includes units, funding, and timelines for social housing development;
 - b) Inventory and prioritize surplus public land suitable for social housing development;
 - c) Identify barriers to social housing development beyond funding;
 - d) Outline financing options and potential funding sources for social housing development;
 - e) Include clear benchmarks and timelines for developing social housing; and
 - f) Compile its findings for social housing strategy and implementation, and post the findings on HCD’s internet website.
- 3) Requires HCD by January 1, 2028, to submit a report to the Legislature with actionable recommendations based on the Social Housing Strategy and Implementation Program findings.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires HCD no later than December 31, 2026, to complete a California Social Housing Study. Requires the study to consist of a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities, resources, obstacles, and recommendations for the creation of affordable and social housing at scale, to assist in meeting the need identified in the statewide projections for below market rate housing affordable to households with extremely low, very low, low, and moderate incomes in the sixth Regional Housing Needs Assessment cycle. (Health and Safety Code Section (HSC) 50613)
- 2) Requires the California Social Housing Study to analyze, among other issues, how public lands can be made available to achieve the goal of producing social housing. (HSC 50613)
- 3) Defines “social housing” to mean housing that meets all of the following requirements:
 - a) The housing units are owned and managed by a public agency, a local authority, a limited-equity housing cooperative, or a mission-driven nonprofit entity solely for the benefit of residents and households unable to afford market rent;
 - b) Each social housing development contains housing units that accommodate a mix of household income ranges, including extremely low, very low, low-, and moderate-income households unable to afford market rent;
 - c) Residents of the housing units enjoy full protection against termination without just cause or for any discriminatory, retaliatory, or other arbitrary reason, and will be afforded due process prior to being subject to eviction procedures;
 - d) The housing units are protected for the duration of their useful life, and the land associated with the housing units is protected permanently, from being sold or transferred to any private person, for-profit entity, or public-private partnership; and
 - e) Residents have the right to participate directly and meaningfully in decision-making affecting the operation and management of the housing units in which they reside.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS:

Author’s statement: According to the author, California’s housing affordability crisis continues to push working families, seniors, and young people out of stable housing as rents rise faster than incomes. Millions of Californians spend an unsustainable share of their earnings on rent, and existing policies have not produced enough permanently affordable homes to meet statewide need.

AB 2094 establishes a social housing pilot program that transforms surplus public land into permanently affordable, publicly owned housing. By leveraging publicly owned land and creating mixed-income housing with rents tied to residents’ incomes, the bill provides a sustainable model that expands housing access while maintaining long-term affordability.

AB 2094 promotes equitable development by prioritizing sites near transit, jobs, and essential services, while supporting high-quality construction and good-paying jobs. This bill offers a practical, scalable approach to increasing housing stability and advancing a more equitable housing future for California.

Background on Social Housing: There is no widely shared consensus on how to define social housing. However, all definitions of social housing distinguish it in various ways from privately-owned, for-profit housing provided through market mechanisms. The Assembly Select Committee on Social Housing held an informational hearing on October 20, 2021, and Rob Weiner from the California Coalition for Rural Housing shared the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) definition of social housing as “the stock of residential rental accommodations provided at sub-market prices and allocated according to specific rules rather than according to market mechanisms.”¹

Under this definition, there are an estimated 480,000 subsidized housing units available for rent in California, or about 3.5% of the state’s housing stock. These deed-restricted affordable rental units are generally built using a mix of public and private financing and residency is restricted to low-income households that make no more than 80% of county area median income (AMI). Other versions of social housing specify permanent affordability requirements and ownership by the government or a non-profit entity. Most of California’s deed-restricted affordable housing is not publicly owned, and the length of affordability requirements varies, though permanent affordability is not required in most cases.

Another variation of social housing involves making accommodations available to all individuals regardless of their household income. In particular, Vienna, Austria, is often held up as an example of a large city with widespread mixed-income social housing—an estimated 40% of the city’s housing stock is social housing. In the Viennese model, higher-income households pay market rate rents, which then subsidize the below-market rents for lower-income households. This mechanism is referred to as “cross-subsidization” and it is the same logic that underlies California’s density bonus law, a policy that allows residential developers to receive added density and other concessions and incentives from a local government in exchange for building a certain percentage of affordable units.

State Excess Sites: High land costs are a major contributing factor to financing and building both market rate and affordable housing. The cost of building affordable housing can be greatly reduced when developers receive donated or low-cost land from the state or local governments. In recognition of the opportunity to leverage state properties that were no longer in use or needed, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Executive Order N-06-19 that ordered the California Department of General Services (DGS) and HCD to identify and prioritize excess state-owned property and aggressively pursue sustainable, innovative, cost-effective housing projects. On July 1, 2024, DGS and HCD released a new digitized inventory of state-owned land that is considered excess and suitable for reuse as affordable housing. HCD and DGS identified and screened over 44,000 State-owned parcels against new criteria to identify state properties with the greatest feasibility for residential development and affordable housing finance program competitiveness and placed selected parcels in the State Excess Sites - Affordable Housing Opportunities Map. Developers can search the map and submit a proposal to HCD to develop the site.

¹ <https://www.assembly.ca.gov/media/assembly-select-committee-social-housing-20211020/video>

SB 555 (Wahab) Chapter 402, Statutes of 2023: SB 555 created the Stable Affordable Housing Act of 2023 (Act) to study the development of social housing through a mix of acquisition and new production. HCD is required to submit a report to the Legislature by December 31, 2026 that includes a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities, resources, obstacles, and recommendations for the creation of affordable and social housing at scale, to assist in meeting the need identified in the statewide projections for below market rate housing affordable to households with extremely low, very low, low, and moderate incomes in the sixth Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) cycle. HCD is required to enlist residents unable to afford market rents, public agencies, and mission-driven nonprofit entities in the creation of the report. HCD's analysis must look at all of the following:

- Funding, public lands, and other resources and opportunities that are, or can be made, available to achieve the goals;
- The capacity and capacity building needs of public agencies and mission-driven nonprofit entities to achieve the goals;
- Constraints and obstacles to achieving the goals, including capital financing and long-term operations and maintenance needs;
- The range of models for creating social housing that are currently in practice, or that public agencies or mission-driven nonprofit entities plan to implement both inside and outside California, including the opportunities, needs, and potential for creating social housing at various income levels specific to each model;
- Tenant protections consistent with each model analyzed that provide long-term stability, including the most protective provisions feasible;
- The impacts on job creation and local economies that could be achieved by using locally based, union-represented workforces for the construction and maintenance of social housing;
- Federal funding, resources, and policy initiatives required to meet the housing needs projected by the sixth RHNA cycle;
- Any other subjects the department identifies through the course of preparing this study that would contribute to meeting the housing needs projected by the sixth RHNA cycle.

This Bill: This bill would require HCD to have a dedicated social housing coordinator who would produce a statewide scaling plan that includes units, funding, and timelines for social housing development. This bill would require HCD to provide a report with actionable recommendations based on the Social Housing Strategy and Implementation Program findings. The Committee may wish to consider whether the creation of a permanent staff person at HCD to oversee a plan to bring social housing to scale may be premature, considering the SB 555 report is not due to the Legislature until the end of 2026.

Related Legislation:

SB 555 (Wahab) Chapter 402, Statutes of 2023 created the Stable Affordable Housing Act of 2023 (Act) for the purposes of studying the development of social housing through a mix of acquisition and new production.

AB 2053 (Lee), Statutes of 2022 would have established the California Housing Authority (CHA) for the purposes of developing mixed-income social housing. This bill died on the Senate Inactive File.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Abundant House California
Church State Council
LeadingAge California

Opposition

Equitable Land Use Alliance
Families and Homes San Jose

Oppose Unless Amended

California Special Districts Association

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