

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS
 CSA1 Bill Id:AB 301 Author:(Schiavo and Rivas)
 As Amended Ver:July 17, 2025
 2/3 vote. Urgency

SUMMARY

Establishes specific timeframes for all state departments involved in postentitlement reviews and approvals for housing developments.

Senate Amendments

Amendments made in the Senate:

- 1) Exclude permits related to drinking water that are issued under federally delegated authority, and waste discharge permits from the state agency permits subject to the bill.
- 2) Change "state department" to "state agency."

COMMENTS

Palisades and Eaton Fires and Rebuilding: On January 7, 2025, two devastating wildfires, the Palisades Fire and Eaton Fire, both ignited in Los Angeles County. The Palisades Fire began in the Santa Monica Mountains, rapidly spreading across over 23,000 acres and destroying over 6,800 structures, primarily in the Pacific Palisades community of the City of Los Angeles.¹ The Eaton Fire ignited in Eaton Canyon near Altadena, burning more than 14,000 acres, destroying over 9,400 structures.² Both fires were fully contained by January 31, 2025. In total, more than 16,000 homes and other structures were destroyed.³

This bill may help Los Angeles rebuild more quickly, and address its ongoing housing affordability crisis, by addressing state permitting requirements and processing timelines that may unduly impede efforts to rebuild properties or facilities destroyed by the Palisades and Eaton fires. It would, however, go further by requiring all state agencies involved in the housing approvals process to adhere to strict review timeframes for all housing development throughout the state, not just for the rebuilding of damaged and destroyed properties in Los Angeles County. This broader scope would not just help with immediate rebuilding efforts, it may also help to reduce barriers to housing development statewide moving forward. Expedited permitting timelines and increased certainty would help to alleviate the housing crisis.

The Housing Approvals Process – Local Postentitlement Phase: Once a project receives entitlement, or approval, from the local planning department, it must obtain postentitlement permits. These include building, demolition, and grading permits issued by the local agency – typically the local building department. Postentitlement permits are related to the physical construction of the development proposal before construction can begin. At the postentitlement stage, plans are reviewed by local agencies for consistency with State Housing Law, which provides requirements and procedures for uniform statewide code enforcement to protect the

¹ <https://www.latimes.com/california/live/la-fire-updates-floods-mud-rain-closures-laguna-eaton-palisades>

² IBID.

³ <https://calmatters.org/environment/wildfires/2025/01/la-county-fires-wildland-urban-interface/>

health, safety, and general welfare of the public and occupants of housing and accessory buildings. AB 2234 (Rivas), Chapter 651, Statutes of 2022, placed time limits on various stages of the postentitlement review process. Under AB 2234, agencies must: determine application completeness within 15 business days of receipt, approve or deny postentitlement permits within 30-60 business days, depending on project size; and provide developers have a clear process to amend applications and appeal denials or incomplete determinations. If a local government violates the timelines in AB 2234, it is a violation of the Housing Accountability Act (HAA).

State Involvement in Housing Approvals: While local governments are primarily responsible for approving housing developments within their jurisdiction, various state agencies may also play a role, depending on the project scope and location. For example, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) reviews housing projects for potential hazardous materials, requiring site cleanup and mitigation plans. The California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) assesses development proposals that impact state highways, reviewing traffic impact analyses, access modifications, and right-of-way needs to ensure housing developments do not create congestion or safety hazards. Approvals and reviews by these agencies, among others, can affect project timelines, costs, and feasibility, particularly for large-scale or infill housing near major transportation corridors. Without clear and enforceable timelines for all state permitting and reviewing bodies, housing development proposals will continue to stall in the permitting pipeline, undermining efforts to expedite permitting at the local level and decreasing predictability for housing development proposals.

This bill would apply the same timeframes and processes established in AB 2234 to any state agencies that are involved in the housing approvals process, addressing a key governmental constraint. The bill excludes permits related to drinking water that are issued under federally delegated authority, and waste discharge permits from the state agency permits subject to the bill. Speeding up housing approvals as proposed in this bill reduces costs by minimizing delays that increase financing, labor, and material expenses. Faster approvals also create more certainty for developers, encouraging investment and increasing housing supply, which helps stabilize prices. Under AB 301, state agencies would have to comply with the following timeframes:

- 1) Fifteen business days to conduct a completeness check;
- 2) Thirty business days to review projects with 25 units or less; and
- 3) Sixty business days to review projects with greater than 25 units.

Failure of a state agency to meet the timeframes outlined in this bill would result in the postentitlement permit being "deemed approved," or the review of the state agency being "deemed complete." This bill contains an urgency clause, so its provisions would become effective immediately in response to the dire affordability and homelessness crisis.

According to the Author

"AB 301 is an exciting step forward in ensuring that state agencies move with the same urgency as local governments to address the housing shortage. By applying firm review deadlines to all state-level approvals, this bill would cut unnecessary delays and help get housing projects off the ground faster. With streamlined processes and increased predictability, California can take a big step toward meeting its housing needs, making homes more accessible and affordable for residents across the state."

Arguments in Support

Members of the California Home Building Alliance write in support: "This bill would reduce governmental constraints to housing development and ensure that the state acts with the same urgency as local governments when it comes to reviewing and approving much-needed housing projects."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Committee on Appropriations:

- 1) The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) similarly indicates it has not yet evaluated the full impact of this bill, but concludes this bill "could potentially require additional resources to ensure that review target timelines are met."
- 2) The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) anticipates little impact to the types of projects it reviews, but to the extent the bill puts increased pressure on staff for more timely reviews, DTSC estimates costs to be minor and absorbable.
- 3) The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) anticipates any costs to be minor and absorbable.
- 4) The Department of General Services (DGS) indicates it is unlikely this bill will affect projects it reviews and approves.

VOTES:**ASM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: 11-0-1**

YES: Haney, Patterson, Ávila Farías, Caloza, Gallagher, Kalra, Lee, Quirk-Silva, Ta, Wicks, Wilson

ABS, ABST OR NV: Gabriel

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Sanchez, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hadwick, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0-4

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Essayli, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Alvarez, Boerner, Davies, Wicks

UPDATED

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FN: 0001995