

## CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

CSA1 Bill Id:AB 571 Author:(Quirk-Silva)

As Amended Ver:June 19, 2025

2/3 vote. Urgency

**SUMMARY**

Exempts the proposed Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery in Anaheim, Orange County from further review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**Senate Amendments**

Add the following conditions to the exemption:

- 1) The cemetery is a less intensive land use than the project analyzed in the 2005 certified environmental impact report Mountain Park Specific Plan Amendment.
- 2) The Gypsum Canyon Cemetery Project Development Project No. 2020-00204 Addendum to the 2005 Certified Environmental Impact Report No. 331 analyzed the impacts of the cemetery.

**COMMENTS**

The Gypsum Canyon Veterans Cemetery project was approved by the Anaheim City Council on July 22, 2024. The proposed cemetery lies on a 283-acre site within a former quarry in the hills on the eastern edge of Anaheim.

In 2005, the city certified a Specific Plan EIR for a large housing development on the site, known as Mountain Park. According to the EIR, the Mountain Park Specific Plan allows for the development of an 830-acre, gated residential community with a maximum of 2,500 residential units, public facilities, infrastructure, a fire station, public trails, trail staging area, concession store/interpretive center, school site, and public community park. The cemetery project was reviewed via an addendum to the 2005 Specific Plan EIR.

On August 20, 2024, proponents of an alternative proposed veterans cemetery at Great Park in Irvine filed a lawsuit against Anaheim and the Orange County Cemetery District. The petitioners claimed that the city's approval violated CEQA by relying on an outdated EIR. The case, *Build the Great Park Veterans Cemetery, et al v. City of Anaheim*, was filed in Orange County Superior Court.

Respondents, including intervenor Orange County, jointly filed a demurrer, arguing the case should be dismissed because the petitioners failed to exhaust their administrative remedies – namely, by not requesting a rehearing after the city approved the project. The trial court sustained the demurrer and granted the petitioners leave to amend, directing them to first follow the city's appeals process before seeking judicial relief.

Rather than pursuing an administrative appeal, the petitioners amended their complaint to include new allegations asserting they had exhausted their remedies, citing a letter sent to the city in July 2024. However, on March 13, 2025, the court again sustained the demurrer – this time without leave to amend – effectively dismissing the lawsuit in its entirety.

**According to the Author**

Our veterans gave everything to protect our freedoms. "All gave some, and some gave all." After years of advocating for the Southern California Veterans Cemetery, AB 571 is the crucial tool we need to deliver on a promise we owe to our veterans and their families. This cemetery will be their final resting place, a place of honor and dignity. The time has come for Orange County to be home to the heroes who defended our country. We cannot afford to delay any longer.

**Arguments in Support**

According to Orange County, AB 571 will accelerate construction of a project that has already undergone extensive environmental review, secured \$50 million in local and state funding, and has secured an unprecedented coalition in strong support. Now is the time to turn this vision into a reality, ensuring Orange County's veterans and their families finally receive the dignified final resting place they deserve.

**Arguments in Opposition**

None received.

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8, negligible state costs.

**VOTES:****ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 14-0-0**

**YES:** Bryan, Alanis, Connolly, Ellis, Flora, Garcia, Haney, Hoover, Kalra, Muratsuchi, Pellerin, Schultz, Wicks, Zbur

**ASM MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS: 8-0-0**

**YES:** Schiavo, Jeff Gonzalez, Ávila Farías, Carrillo, Davies, Michelle Rodriguez, Sharp-Collins, Valencia

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0**

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

**ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0-4**

**YES:** Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, 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, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Dixon, Flora, Jeff Gonzalez, Papan

**SENATE FLOOR: 40-0-0**

**YES:** Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

**UPDATED**

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