
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 893
Author: Fong (D), et al.
Amended: 7/3/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE HOUSING COMMITTEE: 9-1, 7/1/25
AYES: Wahab, Arreguín, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez,
Grayson, Padilla
NOES: Seyarto
NO VOTE RECORDED: Ochoa Bogh

SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE: 5-2, 7/16/25
AYES: Durazo, Arreguín, Cabaldon, Laird, Wiener
NOES: Choi, Seyarto

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 65-5, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Housing development projects: objective standards: campus
development zone

SOURCE: Student Homes Coalition and the University of California Student
Association.

DIGEST: This bill expands the scope of the Affordable Housing and High Road
Jobs Act of 2022, enacted by AB 2011 (Wicks, Chapter 647, Statutes of 2022) to
include campus development zones.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022 (AB
2011), which allows the development of 100% affordable and qualifying

mixed-income housing development projects in commercial zones and corridors.

- 2) Requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to produce studies in 2027 and 2031 on the outcomes of the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022.

This bill:

- 1) Amends the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022 as follows:
 - a) Allows for the streamlined, ministerial review process established in the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022 to be used for housing development projects in campus development zones, provided that the following requirements are met:
 - i) The housing development in a campus development zone will meet affordability requirements that are functionally equivalent to the standards established for mixed-income affordable developments in the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022.
 - ii) Provides that the eligibility of a student to occupy an affordable unit shall be verified by an affidavit, award letter, or letter of eligibility demonstrating that the student is eligible for financial aid, including an institutional grant or fee waiver, provided by: the institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled, by the Student Aid Commission, or by the federal government. For students experiencing homelessness, a homeless services provider or institution of higher education that has knowledge of a person's homelessness status may verify a person's status as homeless.
 - iii) Establishes density limits in campus development zones that are equivalent to the density limits applicable to low vehicle travel areas under the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022; specifically, housing development projects in campus development zones are subject to the following density requirements:
 - (1) For metropolitan jurisdictions: the greater of the local allowable density or 80 units per acre;
 - (2) For nonmetropolitan jurisdictions: the greater of the local allowable density or 70 units per acre; and

- (3) A minimum density of 52.5 units per acre if the housing development application is deemed consistent with objective standards before January 1, 2027.
 - iv) Establishes the following height limits for developments in campus development zones:
 - (1) Forty-five feet, if not located in a metropolitan jurisdiction.
 - (2) Sixty-five feet, if located in a metropolitan jurisdiction.
 - v) Establishes the following objective standards for developments in campus development zones:
 - (1) No setbacks shall be required;
 - (2) All aboveground parking must be set back at least 25 feet; and
 - (3) On the ground floor, a building must have at least 80% of the street frontage within 10 feet of the street.
 - vi) Amends the 25-foot parking setback requirement applicable to mixed-income affordable housing developments that front commercial corridors to specify that it is only applicable to aboveground parking.
 - vii) Provides that easements for public right-of-way, public or private utilities, or other public improvements in, under, or over the property shall not make the property ineligible for streamlined, ministerial review for a mixed-income affordable housing development.
- b) Adds the following definitions:
- i) "Campus development zone" means the set of parcels that are contained either wholly or partially within one-half mile of a "main campus" of the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), or California Community College (CCC);
 - ii) "Extremely low income faculty or staff" means an employee of a UC, CSU, or CCC earning less than 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), adjusted for family size and geographic area, or as defined by the federal government.
 - iii) "Lower income faculty or staff" means an employee of a UC, CSU, or CCC earning less than 80% of the AMI, adjusted for family size and geographic area, or as defined by the federal government.

- iv) "Lower income student" means a student or graduate student who meets any of the following:
 - (1) Has a household income or asset level not exceeding the level for a Cal Grant A or Cal Grant B award recipient or California College Promise Grant (Promise Grant).
 - (2) Qualifies for a Promise Grant, a Federal Pell Grant, or for an exemption from paying nonresident tuition as long as the student also meets the income criteria for CalGrant or the Promise Grant.
- v) "Very low income faculty or staff" means an employee of a UC, CSU, or CCC earning less than 50% of the AMI, adjusted for family size and geographic area, or as defined by the federal government.
- c) Provides that for purposes of determining whether a property or site satisfies the criteria of the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022, a local government's review shall be limited to the area described in the application and shall not include, unless expressly stated otherwise, other contiguous or noncontiguous areas even if under the ownership or control of the project proponent.
- 2) Requires the study HCD will conduct in 2031 to assess the outcomes of the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022 to include an assessment of outcomes related to the provisions added by this bill.

Comments

- 1) *Author statement.* "California continues to be plagued by its housing crisis, short millions of the units needed to reduce the burden of housing costs. This has contributed to homelessness, eroded our quality of life, and stifled our economy. Recent changes in housing law have shown some results but we have yet to turn the tide on housing affordability. Student housing insecurity and student homelessness in particular affects millions of students in our city colleges, CSUs, and UCs. Additionally, students are excluded from many affordable housing units due to policies that don't reflect current conditions and current student demographics. AB 893 addresses these pressing issues by expanding the streamlined, ministerial review process created by AB 2011 to commercially zoned parcels that are within a one-half mile of universities' main campuses. It expands and streamlines eligibility for affordable units to students who would be able to demonstrate need via their financial aid awards. AB 893

builds on existing momentum and sets the groundwork for California to move the needle on the housing costs that are disproportionately affecting students, and it does this while increasing the vitality of the campus communities we know and love.”

- 2) *Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) on student housing.* According to the May 2024 Update on Student Housing Assistance by the LAO, “Housing insecurity can refer to a range of challenges related to student’s living arrangements. At California’s higher education segments, students are commonly described as housing insecure if they face challenges such as difficulty paying rent or utilities, living in overcrowded units, or needing to move frequently. The higher education segments tend to use ‘homelessness’ to refer more specifically to lacking a stable place to stay at night. The segments’ definitions of homelessness typically include students without a permanent home who are temporarily staying with relatives or friends (‘couch surfing’), at hotels or motels, in emergency shelters or transitional housing, and in places not meant for habitation (such as cars or tents)...

“Despite a high degree of legislative interest in student housing insecurity, the state does not have a definitive count of the number of higher education students experiencing housing insecurity or a reliable measure of changes over time. To derive estimates, UC, CSU, CCC, and the California Student Aid Commission have all begun conducting surveys. The data from these surveys, however, have limitations. Most of the surveys had low response rates, such that the respondents might not be representative of the broader student population. Moreover, some surveys limited their sample to specific student groups (such as financial aid applicants) that might have a different likelihood of experiencing housing challenges. Additionally, all of the surveys were administered electronically, which might have resulted in certain students (such as those with less technology access) being less likely to respond. Furthermore, few of the surveys have been undertaken regularly, with results tracked over time to determine whether student housing insecurity is increasing or decreasing.

“Recognizing these data limitations, a notable share of students surveyed at each segment have reported experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness... Rates of students reporting homelessness at some point over the past 12 months ranged from 8 percent of respondents at UC to 24 percent of respondents at CCC. (These results may not be directly comparable across the segments due to differences across surveys in methodology, questions, and

when they were conducted.) Rates of reported housing insecurity or homelessness varied among certain student groups. For example, surveys at all three segments found that Black students and students receiving Pell Grants (federal financial aid for low-income students) reported higher-than-average rates of homelessness. In addition, the CCC and UC surveys disaggregated the data by sexual orientation and found that students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) reported higher-than-average rates of homelessness. The CCC survey also disaggregated the data by age group and found that reported rates of homelessness were highest among students age 26 to 30.”

- 3) *Expanding AB 2011’s scope to student housing.* While AB 2011 requires local governments to ministerially approve certain types of affordable housing projects, it included an extensive list of site-specific and development criteria that a housing development project must meet to qualify for ministerial approval. This bill will expand where AB 2011 projects can occur to include parcels located within one-half mile of a public university, without substantively changing any other features an AB 2011 project or project site must comply with such as affordability and environmental standards. This bill also will not alter the requirements a developer must meet, such as workforce and labor standards, in order to enjoy the streamlined ministerial approval provided to AB 2011 projects.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/19/25)

Student Homes Coalition (Source)

University of California Student Association (Source)

Abode Housing Development

Abundant Housing LA

Associated General Contractors, California Chapters

California Apartment Association

California Community Builders

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

California Council for Affordable Housing

California School Employees Association

California State University, Office of the Chancellor

California YIMBY

Cft- a Union of Educators & Classified Professionals, Aft, Afl-cio

Construction Employers' Association

East Bay YIMBY
Fieldstead and Company, INC.
Genup
Grow the Richmond
Housing Action Coalition
Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis
LISC San Diego
Mountain View YIMBY
Napa-Solano for Everyone
Northern Neighbors SF
Orange County United Way
Our Time to ACT
Peninsula for Everyone
People for Housing - Orange County
Power California Action
San Clemente Affordable Housing Coalition
San Francisco YIMBY
Santa Cruz YIMBY
Santa Rosa YIMBY
Sloco YIMBY
South Bay YIMBY
SPUR
Student Senate for California Community Colleges
The Central Valley Urban Institute
The Kennedy Commission
UC San Diego Housing Commission
United to End Homelessness
United Ways of California
University of California
Ventura County YIMBY
Welcoming Neighbors Home
YIMBY Action
YIMBY Los Angeles

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/19/25)

City of Santa Clarita
City of San Marcos
League of California Cities
South Bay Cities Council of Governments

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: The University of California Student Association writes in support, “Existing streamlining laws like AB 2011 have opened up some commercial land for development around college universities, but have not reached the scale needed to address the ongoing crisis. In addition, students are often barred from accessing the affordable units that are built under existing streamlining laws. By streamlining eligibility for affordable units by verifying income status based on Cal Grant, Pell Grant, and Promise Grant eligibility, AB 893 will ensure that students, staff, and faculty in need are able to access affordable units by their campuses.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: The South Bay Cities Council of Governments writes in opposition, “AB 893 would disregard the state-mandated planning processing and instead force cities to ministerially approve housing on nearly all parcels within a half-mile of a university campus without any regard to the existing zoning or local conditions.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 65-5, 6/2/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hoover, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, 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, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: DeMaio, Gallagher, Jeff Gonzalez, Hadwick, Irwin

NO VOTE RECORDED: Castillo, Chen, Flora, Hart, Lackey, Sanchez, Schiavo, Ta, Tangipa

Prepared by: Hank Brady / HOUSING / (916) 651-4124
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