

Date of Hearing: August 20, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 625 (Wahab) – As Amended July 17, 2025

Policy Committee:	Housing and Community Development	Vote:	12 - 0
	Judiciary		12 - 0

Urgency: No                      State Mandated Local Program: Yes                      Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes statewide a ministerial local approval process for rebuilding homes damaged or destroyed in a declared emergency or disaster (disaster). The bill also streamlines the process for homeowner associations to approve property repairs and reconstruction following a disaster.

Additionally, this bill prohibits a local government from limiting a homeowner's ability to park a mobilehome or recreational vehicle on their property while rebuilding their home.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Deems void and unenforceable any covenant, condition, or restriction (CC&R) in any deed or other instrument, and any provision of a governing document of a common interest development (CID) to the extent it prohibits a substantially similar reconstruction of a residential structure that was destroyed or damaged in a disaster.
- 2) Specifies a court must award reasonable attorney's fees to the proponent of a housing development proposal who prevails in an action to enforce the limitation on CC&Rs described in item 1, above.
- 3) If a modification to a separate interest in a CID requires review pursuant to a CC&R or other governing document, requires the reviewing body to determine if an application is complete within 30 calendar days, conduct its review of a complete application within 30 business days, provide a process to appeal any decision that an application is incomplete or non-compliant, and to rule on any appeal within 60 days, as specified.
- 4) For a housing development located on a parcel on which a residential structure was destroyed or damaged in a disaster, requires a local agency to approve a housing development application within 90 days of receipt, as specified, and prohibits a local agency from subjecting the proposal to a conditional use permit or discretionary review if the application demonstrates the project complies with specified objective standards.
- 5) Prohibits a local agency in an area impacted by a disaster from enforcing an ordinance that precludes the placement and use of a manufactured home, mobilehome, or recreational vehicle on a private lot for use during the reconstruction or repair of any home damaged or destroyed in a disaster for three years following the disaster declaration.

- 6) Specifies this bill offers an optional streamlined, ministerial approval process, but does not affect the availability, applicability, or use of any other exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act.

#### **FISCAL EFFECT:**

Local costs to cities and counties to meet the new streamlined permitting and other requirements in this bill are not reimbursable by the state because local agencies have general authority to charge and adjust planning and permitting fees to cover their administrative expenses associated with new planning mandates.

#### **COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

California has a housing shortage of 2.5 million homes, and the Palisades and Eaton fires have added nearly 13,000 homes to that total. It is critical that we ensure a speedy recovery for Los Angeles, and any future disaster sites, in order to curb the ongoing displacement from an already painful housing crisis. [This bill] allows families to cut red tape—while maintaining appropriate adherence to safety standards—to expedite rebuilding these homes and communities. While Governor Newsome acted swiftly to support rebuilding efforts in Los Angeles, the increasing frequency of climate disasters makes it necessary to codify these actions for all future disasters.

- 2) **Background. CIDs and Homeowner Associations.** CIDs are self-governing housing developments comprised of individually owned housing units and common space that all homeowners and residents of the CID may use. Arrangements of CIDs vary from condominiums, townhouses, and detached single-family homes, to apartment-like high rises. There are approximately 50,000 CIDs in California. CIDs are self-governed by homeowner associations, which manage common property and enforce CC&Rs. Homeowner association members elect volunteer boards of directors who are responsible for interpreting the governing documents and state law.

Existing law enables a homeowner association to require most major modifications to an individual's property be approved by the association board or architectural committee, including remedying any damage a property may incur as a result of an accident or natural disaster.

This bill streamlines the process for homeowner associations to approve property repairs and reconstruction following a disaster, and renders void and unenforceable any CC&R that prohibits or unreasonably conditions a substantially similar reconstruction of a residential structure destroyed or damaged in a disaster.

**Los Angeles Wildfires and Executive Orders (EOs).** On January 7, 2025, two wildfires, the Palisades Fire and Eaton Fire, ignited in Los Angeles County. Together, these fires destroyed over 16,000 structures, including over 13,000 housing units. The destruction of homes caused by these wildfires exacerbated the housing shortage in Los Angeles County and statewide.

In response to the Palisades and Eaton fires, Governor Newsom issued several EOs to help the Los Angeles region rebuild permanent housing quickly. Many of the actions authorized in the EOs expedite the housing approval process and remove permitting barriers at the state and local levels in areas impacted by the fires.

This bill codifies and extends statewide key elements of the Governor's Executive Order N-9-25 by establishing a statutory, streamlined local permit approval process for rebuilding homes destroyed in declared disasters. The bill also includes from the EO, a three-year suspension of any local ordinance disallowing the use of a mobilehome or recreational vehicle on a private lot while rebuilding or repairing a home damaged or destroyed in a disaster.

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