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CITY OF LOMITA

July 11, 2025

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Senator, California State Senate
1021 O St, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 79 (Wiener) Transit-oriented Development
Notice of Opposition (As of 6/23/25)**

Dear Senator Wiener,

The City of Lomita writes to express our strong opposition to your SB 79 (Wiener), which would disregard state-certified housing elements and bestow land use authority to transit agencies without any requirements that developers build housing, let alone affordable housing.

SB 79 doubles down on the recent trend of the State overriding its own mandated local housing elements. This recent initiative mandates that cities in urban transit counties—those with over 15 rail stations—approve transit-oriented development projects near designated transit stops, allowing heights of up to seven stories and densities of 120 homes per acre, all without considering community needs, environmental reviews, or public input. Similarly, non-urban transit counties must approve projects up to five stories high and 80 homes per acre near specific transit stops. This approach risks disregarding the delicate balance between growth and community well-being.

SB 79 would severely impact the City of Lomita by stripping local control over land use decisions and granting transit agencies unchecked authority to approve high-density developments—up to seven stories and 120 homes per acre—without community input, environmental review, or adherence to local zoning. This bill does not require affordable housing, allows for entirely commercial projects instead of residential development, and risks overwhelming Lomita's infrastructure, increasing traffic congestion, and compromising public safety. By disregarding locally adopted housing plans, SB 79 undermines thoughtful community planning and fails to provide real solutions to the housing crisis.

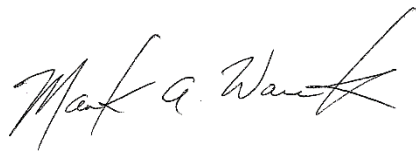
Most alarmingly, SB 79 defies cities' general plans and provides transit agencies unlimited land use authority on property they own or have a permanent easement, regardless of the distance from a transit stop. Transit agencies would have the power to determine all aspects of the development, including height, density, and design, without any regard to local zoning or planning.

This broad new authority applies to both residential and commercial development. Transit agencies could develop 100% commercial projects — even at transit stops — and not provide a single new home, while simultaneously making the argument that more housing must be constructed around transit stops.

The City of Lomita appreciates and respects your desire to pursue a housing production proposal. However, as currently drafted, SB 79 will not spur much-needed housing construction in a manner that supports local flexibility, decision-making, and community input. State-driven ministerial or by-right housing approval processes fail to recognize the extensive public engagement associated with developing and adopting zoning ordinances and housing elements.

California will never produce the number of homes needed with an increasingly state-driven, by-right housing approval process. What we really need is a sustainable state investment that matches the scale of this decades-in-the-making crisis. For these reasons, the City of Lomita strongly opposes SB 79.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Waronek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being the most prominent.

Mark A. Waronek
Mayor
City of Lomita

cc: The Honorable Ben Allen
The Honorable Al Muratsuchi
Lomita City Council
Jeff Kiernan, Cal Cities Regional Public Affairs Manager via email jkiernan@calcities.org
League of California Cities, via email: cityletters@calcities.org