

Date of Hearing: April 5, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Chair  
AB 1505 (Bloom, Chiu, and Gloria) – As Introduced February 17, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Land use: zoning regulations.

**SUMMARY:** Authorizes the legislative body of a city or county to establish inclusionary housing requirements as a condition of the development of residential rental units. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Allows the legislative body of a city or county to adopt an ordinance that requires, as a condition of the development of residential rental units, that the development include a certain percentage of residential rental units affordable to, and occupied by, households with incomes that do not exceed the limits for moderate-income, lower-income, very low-income, or extremely low-income households, as specified.
- 2) States that the Legislature finds and declares all of the following:
  - a) Inclusionary housing ordinances have provided quality affordable housing to over 80,000 Californians, including the production of an estimated 30,000 units of affordable housing in the last decade alone;
  - b) Since the 1970s, over 170 jurisdictions have enacted inclusionary housing ordinances to meet their affordable housing needs;
  - c) While many of these local programs have been in place for decades, a 2009 appellate court decision has created uncertainty and confusion for local governments regarding the use of this tool to ensure the inclusion of affordable rental units in residential developments;
  - d) It is the intent of the Legislature to reaffirm the authority of local jurisdictions to include in these inclusionary housing ordinances requirements related to the provision of rental units;
  - e) The Legislature declares its intent in adding subdivision (g) to Section 65850 of the Government Code, pursuant to Section 1 of this act, to supersede any holding or dicta in any court decision or opinion, to the extent that the decision or opinion conflicts with that subdivision;
  - f) In no case is it the intent of the Legislature in adding subdivision (g) to Section 65850 of the Government Code, pursuant to Section 1 of this act, to enlarge, diminish, or modify in any way the existing authority of local jurisdictions to establish, as a condition of development, inclusionary housing requirements, beyond reaffirming their applicability to rental units;
  - g) This act does not modify or in any way change or affect the authority of local jurisdictions to require, as a condition of the development of residential units, that the

development include a certain percentage of residential for-sale units affordable to, and occupied by, households with incomes that do not exceed the limits for moderate-income, lower-income, very low-income, or extremely low-income households; and,

- h) States that it is the intent of the Legislature to reaffirm that existing law requires that the action of any legislative body of any city, county, or city and county to adopt a new inclusionary housing ordinance be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly consistent with the requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Grants cities and counties the power to make and enforce within their limits all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws.
- 2) Declares the Legislature's intent to provide only a minimum of limitation with respect to zoning in order that counties and cities may exercise the maximum degree of control over local zoning matters.
- 3) Specifically authorizes the legislative body of any county or city to adopt ordinances that do any of the following:
  - a) Regulate the use of buildings, structures, and land as between industry, business, residences, open space, agriculture, recreation, enjoyment of scenic beauty, use of natural resources, and other purposes;
  - b) Regulate signs and billboards;
  - c) Regulate all of the following:
    - i) The location, height, bulk, number of stories, and size of buildings and structures;
    - ii) The size and use of lots, yards, courts, and other open spaces;
    - iii) The percentage of a lot that may be occupied by a building or structure; and,
    - iv) The intensity of land use.
  - d) Establish requirements for offstreet parking and loading;
  - e) Establish and maintain building setback lines; and,
  - f) Create civic districts around civic centers, public parks, public buildings, or public grounds, and establish regulations for those civic districts.
- 4) Limits, pursuant to the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act, the permissible scope of local rent control ordinances and generally gives the owner of residential real property the right to establish the initial rental rate for a dwelling or unit.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** None

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Bill Summary.** This bill authorizes the legislative body of any city or county to adopt ordinances to require, as a condition of the development of residential units, that the development include a certain percentage of residential rental units affordable to, and occupied by, households with incomes that do not exceed the limits for moderate-income, lower-income, very low-income, or extremely low-income households, as specified. The bill also makes a number of other findings and declarations related to inclusionary housing.

This bill is co-sponsored by the California Housing Consortium, the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, Housing California, Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California, and the Western Center on Law & Poverty.

- 2) **Author's Statement.** According to the author, "Inclusionary policies have been utilized in California for decades, dating back to the late 1970s. However, an appellate court decision – *Palmer v. City of Los Angeles* – cut off one crucial option for local governments: the ability to apply inclusionary policies to rental housing. The *Palmer* court improperly conflated rent control, which is regulated by the state's Costa Hawkins Act, and deed-restricted affordable housing, which is not, creating uncertainty and confusion for local governments and housing advocates regarding the future viability of this important and well-established local land use tool.

"AB 1505 is narrowly focused on allowing local inclusionary policies to require the provision of affordable rental housing, if so desired locally, effectively restoring the law as it stood prior to 2009.

"It is important to note that AB 1505 does not authorize inclusionary housing. There is no need for such authorization because adopting inclusionary policies is and always has been a constitutional exercise of the local police power. This was unanimously affirmed by the California Supreme Court in 2015 in *CBIA vs. City of San Jose*. The court also affirmed that local governments must provide developers with economically beneficial incentives if their inclusionary policies require developers to provide affordable units.

"AB 1505 does not mandate anything. Local governments may choose to adopt inclusionary policies, as many cities and counties in California have done over the last five decades. Under AB 1505, it will continue to be a local choice."

- 3) **Background.** California Constitution Article XI, Section 7, grants each city and county the power "to make and enforce within its limits all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws." This is generally referred to as the police power of local governments. The Planning and Zoning Law is a general law that sets forth minimum standards for cities and counties to follow in land use regulation, but the law also establishes the Legislature's intent to "provide only a minimum of limitation in order that counties and cities may exercise the maximum degree of control over local zoning matters."

Using this police power, many cities and counties have adopted ordinances, commonly called "inclusionary zoning" or "inclusionary housing" ordinances, that require developers to ensure that a certain percentage of housing units in a new development be affordable to lower-income households. These ordinances vary widely in the percentage of affordable units required, the depth of affordability required, and the options through which a developer may

choose to comply. Most, if not all, of such ordinances apply to both rental and ownership housing.

In 2009, in the case of *Palmer v. City of Los Angeles*, the Second District California Court of Appeal opined that the city's affordable housing requirements associated with a particular specific plan (which was similar to an inclusionary zoning ordinance), as it applied to rental housing, conflicted with and was preempted by a state law known as the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act. The Costa-Hawkins Act limits the permissible scope of local rent control ordinances. Among its various provisions is the right for a rental housing owner generally to set the initial rent level at the start of a tenancy, even if the local rent control ordinance would otherwise limit rent levels across tenancies. This provision is known as vacancy decontrol because the rent level is temporarily decontrolled after a voluntary vacancy. The Act also gives rental housing owners the right to set the initial and all subsequent rental rates for a unit built after February 1, 1995. The court opined that "forcing Palmer to provide affordable housing units at regulated rents in order to obtain project approval is clearly hostile to the right afforded under the Costa-Hawkins Act to establish the initial rental rate for a dwelling or unit."

The Legislature enacted the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act in 1995 with the passage of AB 1164 (Hawkins), Chapter 331. The various analyses for this bill exclusively discuss rent control ordinances and do not once mention inclusionary zoning ordinances, of which approximately 64 existed in the state at that time. The Assembly concurrence analysis of AB 1164, which is very similar to the other analyses, states that the bill "establishes a comprehensive scheme to regulate local residential rent control." The analysis includes a table of jurisdictions that would be affected by the bill, and the table exclusively includes cities with rent control ordinances and does not include any cities that had inclusionary zoning ordinances affecting rental housing. The analysis also states, "Proponents view this bill as a moderate approach to overturn extreme vacancy control ordinances which unduly and unfairly interfere into the free market." The analysis further describes strict rent control ordinances as those that impose vacancy control and states, "Proponents contend that a statewide new construction exemption is necessary to encourage construction of much needed housing units, which is discouraged by strict local rent controls." This legislative history provides no indication that the Legislature intended to affect inclusionary zoning with the passage of AB 1164.

#### 4) **Prior Legislation:**

- a) AB 1229 (Atkins) of 2013, would have expressly authorized cities and counties to establish inclusionary housing requirements as a condition of development. The bill further declared the intent of the Legislature to supersede any holding or dicta in *Palmer v. City of Los Angeles* that conflicts with this authority. AB 1229 was vetoed with the message:

"This bill would supersede the holding of *Palmer v. City of Los Angeles* and allow local governments to require inclusionary housing in new residential development projects. As Mayor of Oakland, I saw how difficult it can be to attract development to low and middle income communities. Requiring developers to include below-market units in their projects can exacerbate these challenges, even while not meaningfully increasing the amount of affordable housing in a given community. The California Supreme Court is

currently considering when a city may insist on inclusionary housing in new developments. I would like the benefit of the Supreme Court's thinking before we make legislative adjustments in this area."

- b) AB 1505 is substantially similar to a bill introduced last year, AB 2502 (Mullin and Chiu). While AB 2502 passed out of both this Committee and the Housing and Community Development Committee, it did not move out of the Assembly.
- 5) **California Building Industry Association (CBIA) v. City of San Jose.** The City of San Jose's inclusionary housing ordinance passed in 2010 and required all new residential development projects of 20 or more units to sell at least 15% of the for-sale units at a price that is affordable to low- or moderate-income households. The ordinance allowed developers to opt out of the 15% requirements by dedicating land elsewhere or by paying "in-lieu" fees to the City. Shortly before the ordinance took effect, CBIA filed a lawsuit in superior court, maintaining that the ordinance was invalid on its face on the ground that the city, in enacting the ordinance, failed to provide a sufficient evidentiary basis "to demonstrate a reasonable relationship between any adverse public impacts or needs for additional subsidized housing units in the City ostensibly caused by or reasonably attributed to the development of new residential developments of 20 units or more and the new affordable housing exactions and conditions imposed on residential development by the Ordinance."

The superior court agreed with CBIA's contention and issued a judgment enjoining the City from enforcing the challenged ordinance. The Court of Appeal then reversed the superior court judgment, and concluded that the matter should be remanded to the trial court. CBIA then sought review of the Court of Appeal decision in the Supreme Court which granted review.

The Supreme Court in June of 2015 concluded that the Court of Appeal decision should be upheld, and that "contrary to CBIA's contention, the conditions the San Jose ordinance imposes upon future development do not impose 'exactions' upon the developers' property so as to bring into play the unconstitutional conditions doctrine under the takings clause of the federal or state Constitution." The ruling also noted that enforcing these limits to address a growing housing problem is "constitutionally legitimate" and cited the severe scarcity of affordable housing in California in its decision.

- 6) **Arguments in Support.** Supporters argue that despite the long track record of success of inclusionary policies, the Palmer decision cut off one crucial option for local governments: the ability to apply inclusionary policies to rental housing. Supporters argue that the Palmer court improperly conflated rent control, which is regulated by the state's Costa Hawkins Act, and deed-restricted affordable housing, which is not, creating uncertainty for the future viability of this important and well-established local land use tool. According to supporters, this bill simply restores the law to what it had been for decades prior to 2009, allowing the policies that have been effective at creating affordable housing for the last 40 years to continue without fear of litigation.
- 7) **Arguments in Opposition.** Opponents argue that the bill provides no flexibility and allow a city to force a developer to use only one method of inclusionary – the requirement for rent controlled units. Opponents argue that there are many alternative options that may work better, such as in lieu fees, land dedication, and housing trust funds, and that each local

community and housing project is unique. Additionally, opponents argue that the language in the bill will discourage the construction of badly needed new housing in California.

- 8) **Double-Referral.** This bill is double-referred to the Housing and Community Development Committee, where it will be heard next, should the bill pass out of this Committee.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

California Housing Consortium [CO-SPONSOR]  
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation [CO-SPONSOR]  
Housing California [CO-SPONSOR]  
Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California [CO-SPONSOR]  
Western Center on Law & Poverty [CO-SPONSOR]  
American Planning Association, California Chapter  
California Coalition for Rural Housing  
California Housing Partnership  
California League of Conservation Voters  
California State Association of Counties  
Cities of Los Angeles, Napa, West Hollywood  
Coalition for Economic Survival  
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto  
Council of Infill Builders  
County of Los Angeles  
Disability Rights California  
EAH Housing  
Eden Housing  
Greenbelt Alliance  
Housing California  
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley  
League of California Cities  
Legal Aid Society of San Mateo  
Legal Services of Northern California  
MidPen Housing Corporations  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Planning and Conservation League  
Public Advocates  
Public Interest Law Project  
SF Council of Community Housing Organizations  
State Building and Construction Trades Council  
Tenants Together  
The Kennedy Commission

**Opposition**

Apartment Association, California Southern Cities  
Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles  
Apartment Association of Orange County  
California Apartment Association (unless amended)  
California Association of Realtors (unless amended)  
CalChamber (unless amended)  
California Business Properties Association (unless amended)  
East Bay Rental Housing Association  
North Valley Property Owners Association  
Santa Barbara Rental Property Association

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