



Post Office Box 661450 – Los Angeles, CA 90066  
[www.delreyhome.org](http://www.delreyhome.org)

September 9, 2019

VIA U.S.P.S.

Governor Gavin Newsom  
State Senator Ben Allen (26th District)  
Assemblymember Autumn Burke (62<sup>nd</sup> District)  
Assemblymember Sydney Kamlager-Dove (54<sup>th</sup> District)

Re:   1. Density Bonuses Do Not Solve the Housing Affordability Problem  
      2. State enforcement needed to confirm developers honor the deal  
      3. Revisit definition of low income  
      4. Tie Density Bonus to qualified tenants in greatest need

You are the state officials that represent our Del Rey neighborhood (about 35,000 residents in the area of Los Angeles that has become known as “Silicon Beach.”). We urge you to **oppose** any legislation that purports to address the housing affordability problem by permitting more construction without consideration of the many other needs that must be met when housing and residents are added to a community, e.g. streets and sidewalks, parking, transit systems, utilities, schools, parks and other public services.

The State of California needs to look hard at whether the existing state laws allowing more housing construction in fact have created more affordable housing, and whether increased density actually has benefitted anyone other than the developers. To our knowledge, the State does not even know how “dense” our housing is, i.e. how many people per bedroom we have.

Our particular concern is with the implementation of Senate Bill 1818 (Government Code 65915, effective January 1, 2005), although Del Rey also has been affected by density increases from accessory dwelling units, short term rental units, bootleg apartments, small lot subdivisions and co-living projects. Proposed transit improvements that could lead to “transit-oriented developments” also pose a threat.

Since 2005, the Del Rey Residents Association has heard presentations by many developers who sought SB 1818 density bonuses, promising to set aside units for “Low Income” or “Very Low Income” occupants for a 30-year period if their projects could be taller and more massive. Then we found that some developers were being allowed to build more dense projects without providing affordable housing or without community input, were building and operating businesses on property zoned for housing, were disregarding affordable housing covenants by advertising units at market rate rents. In short, SB 1818 was not accomplishing its purpose of getting more affordable units built, but it was imposing unplanned density on Del Rey.

We also found out how few of the “density bonus” units have been registered with the City of Los Angeles Department of Housing and Community Investment and how little effort is made to ensure that the units are made available to everyone who meets the income qualifications.

The threshold for “low-income” is much too high. Under current California Department of Housing and Community Development guidelines, in Los Angeles County a single person with an income of \$58,450 would qualify for a Low Income Unit. This certainly violates the spirit of SB1818 density bonus plan to serve those most in need.

Under current law, there is no relationship between the number of people who would qualify for a density bonus unit and the size of the incentive that a developer receives for including density bonus units in a project. The law needs to provide that if a developer is going to be allowed to build outside of the zoned capacity of a property, the incentive should be tied to whether the project is actually meeting the need for affordable housing.

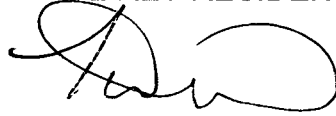
As we have been forced to accept unplanned density in exchange for virtually unmonitored SB 1818 units, the State should conduct a review of all of the building permits issued since 2005 and be sure that it is known where density bonus units have been built and that the landlords have only been renting to qualified tenants. In the City of Los Angeles, one would need to review all of the permits issued by the Department of City Planning (discretionary) and the Department of Building and Safety (by right).

We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you or one of your representatives to further discuss how the state’s density bonus law should be amended to address the need for affordable housing without destroying local land use planning.

Our board discussed and approved this letter at our September 9, 2019, board meeting.

Very truly yours,

DEL REY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tara Walden', written over the printed name.

Tara Walden  
President

VIA E-MAIL:  
Councilmember Mike Bonin  
C.D. 11 Planning Deputy Len Nguyen  
C.D. 11 Del Rey Deputy Hannah Levien