



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

April 5, 2023

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Heather Abrams, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Authorize Mayor to send a letter of opposition to SB 423 (Wiener) Streamlined housing approvals: multifamily housing developments: SB 35 (Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017) Expansion

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Mayor to send a letter of opposition to SB 423 (Wiener).

DISCUSSION

Vice Mayor Coler asked that this item be added to the agenda for the Council's consideration.

FISCAL IMPACT

None identified

ATTACHMENT

Draft letter

DRAFT LETTER

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Committee on Housing
1021 O Street, Suite 3330
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 423 (Wiener) Streamlined housing approvals: multifamily housing developments: SB 35
(Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017) Expansion.
Notice of Opposition

Dear Senator Wiener:

On behalf of the Fairfax Town Council, I write to express our opposition to SB 423, which would greatly expand SB 35 (Chapter 366, Statutes of 2017) provisions and eliminate the January 1, 2026 sunset date.

SB 423 would double-down on the recent trend of the state overriding its own mandated local housing plans by forcing towns like Fairfax to approve certain housing projects without regard to the needs of the community, opportunities for environmental review, or public input. While it may be frustrating for some developers to address neighborhood concerns about traffic, parking, and other development impacts, those directly affected by such projects have a right to be heard. Public engagement also often leads to better projects. Not having such outlets will increase public distrust in government and result in additional ballot measures limiting housing development.

Instead of continuing to pursue top-down, one-size-fits-all legislation, lawmakers should partner with local officials. California will never produce the number of homes needed with an increasingly state driven, by-right housing approval process. What is really needed is a sustainable state investment that matches the scale of this long-term crisis. That's why we are calling on the Governor and lawmakers to include a \$3 billion annual investment in the state budget to help municipalities prevent and reduce homelessness and allow reasonable housing development. Targeted, ongoing funding is the only way we can find community-based solutions that get our residents off the streets and keep them in their homes.

For these reasons, the Town of Fairfax respectfully opposes SB 423.

Sincerely,

Chance Cutrano
Mayor, Town of Fairfax

Cc: Members, Senate Committee on Housing