

### Letter Instructions:

**Email your letter to:** Tate Hanna, Legislative Aide, Sen. Wiener ([Tate.Hanna@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Tate.Hanna@sen.ca.gov)) and Cc: Abram Diaz, NPH Policy Director ([Abram@nonprofithousing.org](mailto:Abram@nonprofithousing.org))

**And submit to:** <https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/> (note that your organization will need to create a free account)

### PLACE ON LETTERHEAD

[Insert Date]

The Honorable Scott Wiener  
California State Senate  
1021 O Street, Suite 6630  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### Re: Senate Bill 4 - Affordable Housing on Faith Lands Act - Support

Dear Senator Wiener,

On behalf of [Organization Name], we write in support of Senate Bill (SB) 4, the Affordable Housing on Faith Lands Act. This measure would make building affordable housing easier, faster, and cheaper on land owned by faith-based institutions and nonprofit colleges.

[Include 1-2 sentences to briefly describe your organization: You may include how many people you serve and where, how many people you employ and where, etc.]

Across California, faith-based organizations and non-profit colleges are seeking to partner with affordable housing developers to build critically needed affordable homes on their own land. These faith-based organizations are long-standing community anchors and are driven by their values to support those most in need and help address our homelessness crisis.

Per a study by the UC Berkeley Turner Center, there are approximately 38,800 acres of land—roughly the size of the city of Stockton—used for religious purposes and are potentially developable. A significant share of that acreage (45 percent) is located in the state’s “high” or “highest” resource opportunity areas, signaling an opportunity for building housing in neighborhoods with lower poverty rates and greater economic, educational, and environmental amenities.

Unfortunately, the land that these organizations hold can often be locked into complicated and cost-prohibitive local zoning rules and regulations. These can range from standards which allow only a few units to be built on large parcels to others which limit any housing construction at all. The variety of red tape and obstacles in the way make development financially infeasible and discourage institutions from moving forward with projects that would benefit their low-income and unhoused neighbors.

A 2022 report from the California Department of Housing and Community Development found that we need to build 1.2 million affordable homes over the next decade to meet our housing goals. Over the last few years, California has added an average of 19,000 affordable units a year. At this

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pace we will not reach our state goals without increased streamlining for affordable housing production.

SB 4 will streamline the building process and offer new tools for neighborhood leaders to build safe, stable, affordable homes for local residents and families. This bill will allow places of worship to build 100% affordable housing projects, creating a valuable option in the midst of the state's housing and homelessness crises. It also provides significant untapped benefits for faith-based organizations, from supporting an organization's charitable mission to providing revenue that can stabilize the organization's finances.

This is a common-sense opportunity for us to partner with trusted community leaders. The catastrophic tragedies we see on the street every day call for urgent and bold action and this bill will help us move forward. Thank you for your leadership on these critical housing and homelessness issues and for all these reasons, we support this bill.

Sincerely,

[Insert Your Full Name]

[Insert Your Title]

[Insert Your Organization's Name]



June 14, 2022

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

RE: **SB 4 (Wiener) Affordable Housing on Faith and Higher Education Lands Act of 2023**  
(As amended 5/18/2023) **Notice of Support if Amended**

Dear Senator Wiener:

The League of California Cities (Cal Cities) writes to express a support if amended position on your measure SB 4, which would require local jurisdictions to approve 100% affordable housing development projects on land owned by mission driven religious institutions and independent institutions of higher education if the development satisfies specified criteria.

Housing affordability and homelessness are among the most critical issues facing California cities. Affordably priced homes are out of reach for many people and housing is not being built fast enough to meet the current or projected needs of people living in the state. SB 4 could help spur much needed affordable housing construction by allowing religious institutions and nonprofit private colleges to build 100% affordable housing on infill sites they own prior to Jan. 1, 2024. These institutions must follow nearly all locally adopted objective development standards, including objective design review standards.

Cal Cities would be able to take a full support position on SB 4 if it is amended to allow local jurisdictions to continue to determine maximum building heights and parking requirements.

We all know that streamlining the housing approval process alone will not solve the housing crisis. That is why Cal Cities continues to call on the Governor and lawmakers to include a \$3 billion annual investment in the state budget to help cities prevent and reduce homelessness and spur affordable housing development. Targeted, ongoing funding is the only way cities can find community-based solutions that get our residents off the streets and keep them in their homes.

Cal Cities looks forward to working with you and other stakeholders on legislative and budget proposals that will produce much needed housing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Rhine".

Jason Rhine  
Assistant Director, Legislative Affairs

Cc: Members, Assembly Committee on Housing