

NEWS

FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER
PAUL KORETZ
FIFTH DISTRICT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNCILMEMBER KORETZ FORMALLY OPPOSES SENATE BILL SB 50

February 28, 2019 – Los Angeles, CA – Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz (CD5), introduced a resolution yesterday in formal opposition to California State Senate Bill 50 (Wiener) that ostensibly seeks to require upzoning in cities throughout California to increase affordable housing and density along transit corridors regardless of local jurisdiction's zoning laws.

The resolution points out that SB 50 would allow construction of higher density multi-family housing developments near major transit stops that are out-of-compliance with local land use regulations and procedures and requests that the City of Los Angeles oppose the bill in its 2019-20 State Legislative Program, unless the bill is amended to exclude the City of Los Angeles from its provisions. Los Angeles already has its own increased density mechanisms that are being tailored to better fit the city's many unique neighborhoods.

“While we all agree that we need to build more affordable housing, particularly near transit, SB 50 focuses mainly on the creation of market-rate housing and takes away planning oversight from local jurisdictions,” said Councilmember Paul Koretz. “Furthermore, Los Angeles is more progressive than many California cities in that it already incentivizes multifamily development through Measure JJJ and the Transit Oriented Community program – both of which could be set back if SB 50 becomes law. State control of local zoning undermines not only the integrity of cities and counties, but strips residents of their ability to engage in a meaningful planning and community building process.”

SB 50 is a new iteration of Wiener's earlier controversial SB 827 that was killed in its first committee hearing. The earlier bill would have allowed the construction of apartment buildings up to five stories tall near every high-frequency mass transit stop in the state regardless of local residential preservation zoning law. It was opposed by many California cities including Los Angeles.

Councilmember Koretz has been a constant critic of both bills pointing out that “the passage of SB 50 would still threaten single-family neighborhoods in CD5 and elsewhere, where we could look forward to seeing tall narrow 4 to 5 story buildings towering over single-family homes until they are squeezed out and many analysts have interpreted the vague language of the bill to mean that those heights are minimum requirements and that the buildings could end up being built much taller.”

“I applaud Councilmember Koretz for once again leading the City's opposition against Wiener's dystopian version of the growth of California's cities,” said Jill Stewart, Executive Director of the Coalition to Preserve LA. “As was the case with SB 827, Wiener's newer bill seeks to end the world of yards, single-family homes, tree-lined streets and places for children to thrive. The media does not seem to understand that SB 50 is a Russian Nesting Egg whose undeniable but purposely obscured outcomes are far, far worse than SB 827. SB 50 openly threatens the "sensitive communities" of Los Angeles, requiring them to upzone their own starter-home neighborhoods out of existence by 2025. It's a direct attack on Latino and black home ownership, on families with children, and on our crucial environmental need for trees and places to breathe.”

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