

Affordable Housing

On August 21st CALE (California Association of Local Electeds) held a Zoom conferences with State Senator Jim Beall on the subject of Affordable Housing. We had elected officials from all over California, as well as several candidates for elected office, including Cupertino City Council Candidate Kitty Moore (no other Cupertino City Council Candidates called in, which speaks volumes about their lack of commitment to affordable housing). Also participating was Govind Tatachari, Candidate for Foothill-DeAnza Community College District Board of Trustees.

We had a very good discussion with Senator Beall. Senator Beall is a refreshing voice of reason and has a knowledge base of affordable housing unequalled by any other legislator. Unfortunately, Senator Beall is termed out and will be gone from the Senate at the end of 2020.

Some of the key points made by Senator Beall are the following:

- There is no need for any more market rate housing
- There is a big need for affordable housing for seniors and families
- There is a big need for affordable housing for the developmentally disabled
- Jim Beall's 2019 SB-5, which would have provided \$2 billion per year in funding for affordable housing was vetoed by Governor Newsom. It was the only housing bill in the 2019 session that would have helped build affordable housing,
- Jim Beall's 2020 SB-795 would have provided \$2 billion per year in funding for affordable housing was held in Appropriations Committee and is Dead. It was the only housing bill in the 2020 session that would have helped build affordable housing,
- Jim Beall likes the Embarcadero Institute's Housing Studies.
- The State of California has no interest in spending money on affordable housing
- We must stop fueling speculation by developers that drives up the cost of land needed for affordable housing.

There are other issues regarding affordable housing that have been impacted by the bad actors in the State Legislature, aided by the WIMBY (Wall Street In My Back Yard groups):

- Developers find ways to avoid following City's regulations for Affordable Housing
- SB-35 has allowed Developers to Avoid Building Affordable Housing for Families
- Gentrification and Displacement is the goal of many of the legislators that are funded by developers and real estate investors.

We need to do several things to address the housing affordability crisis:

- We need to create a mass transit system that can move workers from areas with affordable housing to the job centers. This was the impetus behind the ACE train (as well as BART and Caltrain many decades ago).
- We need to stop uncontrolled growth in areas with limited resources of land, and that are already at capacity in terms of roads and schools.
- We need to limit commercial office space in cities with no space for more housing is something Palo Alto is doing, and other cities should follow.
- We need housing bills that have requirements for affordable housing
- Housing assistance should be funded by business taxes, not bonds funded by parcel taxes. Lobbying organizations for businesses, like the Chamber of Commerce and the Silicon Valley

Leadership Group have, for decades, successfully avoided funding infrastructure, including housing and transportation, by promoting parcel taxes and sales taxes.

- We need to prevent developers from bypassing the California Environmental Quality Act by the use of ballot initiatives.
- We need to find ways to encourage developers to build their RHNA-approved housing. We are not getting the BMR housing that is part of new projects because these projects are not being built to California's current glut of market-rate housing.
- We need to fight the Astroturf groups that are funded by developers and that advocate for luxury market-rate housing and that oppose affordable housing. We have multiple such groups in Cupertino.



The Veranda Project in Cupertino