



Catholic Charities

MARIN ♦ SAN FRANCISCO ♦ SAN MATEO

990 Eddy Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
CatholicCharitiesSF.org

T 415 972 1200

Feb 22, 2023

The Honorable Anna Caballero, Chair
Senate Governance & Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 407
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Dear Senator Caballero and Senator Wiener,

On behalf of Catholic Charities San Francisco, 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.

Catholic Charities San Francisco is one of the largest and most comprehensive human services organizations in Northern California, meeting the needs of the most vulnerable populations in San Francisco, Marin, and San Mateo counties including families experiencing homelessness, low-income seniors aging in isolation, and immigrants living in overcrowded conditions while working three jobs.

We work in partnership with local, state, and federal government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and local interfaith communities, including more than 90 Catholic churches and 70+ parochial schools that serve 450,000 residents in the Bay Area.

As you know, the political and fiscal environments in 2023 pose a number of challenges to both legislators at all levels and local human services providers, as we need to be both fiscally responsible during a difficult economic environment while still meeting the needs of those impacted by a growing and more diverse group of issues and obstacles. We endorse SB 4 as a particularly creative solution to the housing crisis by removing obstacles that make development financially infeasible and discourage religious and nonprofit institutions from moving forward with projects that would benefit their low-income and unhoused neighbors.

Churches, mosques, synagogues and nonprofit colleges often have excess land available for development near transit, job centers, and other community resources. SB4 would help address California's housing crisis by streamlining the building process for religious institutions and nonprofit colleges that seek to build 100% affordable housing on their land.



Catholic Charities

MARIN ♦ SAN FRANCISCO ♦ SAN MATEO

A 2022 report from the California Department of Housing and Community Development found that we need to build 1.2 million affordable homes in our state 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 pace we will not reach our state goals without increased streamlining for affordable housing production.

SB 4 will simplify 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. Catholic Charities supports this common-sense opportunity for California to partner with trusted community leaders.

The tragedies we see on the street every day call for urgent and bold action and SB4 will help us move forward. Thank you for your leadership on these critical housing and homelessness issues. We enthusiastically back this bill and encourage your support as well.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend Salvatore Cordileone
Archbishop of San Francisco
Chairman, Catholic Charities

Dr. Ellen Hammerle
Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Charities San Francisco
ehammerle@CatholicCharitiesSF.org

Patrick Woody, Chair
Catholic Charities Board Public Interest Committee
pwoody@CatholicCharitiesSF.org

Jane Ferguson Flout, D.Min.
Catholic Charities San Francisco
Director of Strategic & Community Partnerships
jfergusonflout@CatholicCharitiesSF.org