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February 11, 2021

Senator Mike McGuire
Senate District 02
State Capitol, Room 5061
Sacramento, Ca 95814

Subject: Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association Opposes Senate Bill 9

Dear Senator McGuire,

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association, representing thousands of families in the San Fernando Valley, opposes California Senate Bill 9 introduced December 7, 2020. SB 9 makes building multi-family market-rate housing developments possible in single-family neighborhoods by ministerial approval, cutting out all regulatory, environmental, and discretionary community reviews. SOHA feels SB 9 negatively impacts single-family neighborhoods while not addressing the real issue, affordable housing. SB 9's trickle-down theory that adding any type of housing will eventually produce affordable housing is disputed by economist when applied to a heated housing market like Los Angeles' and proven false by many cities that have tried. This bill adds value to land by allowing more density to be built on each parcel which increases land costs thereby making housing even more expensive.

SB 9's first provision that allows duplexes is unnecessary. LA allows 1,200-square-foot homes/Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and 500-square-foot Junior ADUs on every single-family lot. As a result, single-family neighborhoods are adding thousands of units of housing. These ADUs can be converted garages or separate living units on an individual's existing property. Today, every single-family zoned property can be considered multi-family.

SB 9's second provision that allows lot-splitting that encourages land speculators to buy houses, demolish them, split the lot, and build six to eight market-rate housing units where one house previously existed. This will increase land values exponentially and make affordable housing impossible. Furthermore, SB 9 negligently does not restrict the house size.

SB 9 will exacerbate our affordable housing crises. Furthermore, SB9:

- **Requires No Infrastructure Improvements** – The magnitude of this bill's impact must be considered in terms of current infrastructure capability. The existing sewer, power, water and gas infrastructure cannot handle the new demands. The state pushes the financial burden of required infrastructure improvements not on itself or developers but on local jurisdictions.
- **Triggers Life/Safety Issues** – With only four-foot side and rear setbacks, as opposed to the current 5-foot side and 15-foot rear setbacks, SB 9's impacts on light, air, and privacy for residents will be huge.
- **Poses Huge Fire Risks** – Lot splitting densifies areas and shrinks the space between homes. Fires sweeping down canyons or down a neighborhood block will now endanger many more households, impacting exiting routes and firefighters' ability to reach these fires.
- **Reduces Open Space and Permeable Surface** – Expanding building footprints and less open space badly impacts aquifers and the urban canopy. SB 9 will drastically reduce the size of backyards and necessitates the loss of trees. Legislators worry about the environmental impacts of urban sprawl yet the impact caused by destroying our physical environment should be just as concerning.

There is no justification for this bill. We have numerous options for adding housing without ruining existing neighborhoods. SB 9 is based on a totally flawed economic premise.

Current zoning has under-utilized capacity in our commercial corridors and multi-family zones. We need to encourage efficient land use and development of our publicly owned lands. To add affordable housing, we must have redevelopment funds reinstated by the State and not be dependent on private developers to provide a small, insufficient percent of affordable housing in return for huge density bonuses.

Existing neighborhoods add character and vibrancy to our city and protecting them from up-zoning is something we should expect from our elected representatives when there are so many other options available to solving our housing crisis.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Maria Pavlou Kalban,
Board Member, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association
Chair, Housing Committee