

City of Palo Alto

*Office of the Mayor and City
Council*

January 17, 2020

Dear Senator Wiener,

I want to thank you for your leadership on housing affordability and many other issues of great importance to our state. I'm writing you today to express my strong support for SB50, your bill to promote affordable, secure, and abundant housing across the state.

Housing affordability, supply, and security are among the top concerns of my community. While Palo Alto has always been expensive, things have truly gotten out of hand, and the community is no longer affordable to seniors on fixed incomes, long-time renters, young families hoping to put down roots, or even double-income professional households.

The most important thing to me about Palo Alto is our diversity - of people, ideas, landscapes, politics, and cultures. In order to maintain and increase that diversity, we simply need more housing. SB50 - the more HOMES act - offers my city and the state the best opportunity to provide secure, abundant, and affordable housing for people of all generations, incomes, and backgrounds. I strongly support this - and other - housing legislation.

I was born and raised in Palo Alto, and I'm the youngest of six kids - and the only one who still lives here. I have always loved my city and the Bay Area, and my wife and I want to start our family here. But without radical change in our housing marketplace, my town, the Bay Area, and California at large will rapidly lose young families, hardworking innovators, dedicated civil servants, and many more... essentially, the lifeblood of what makes our state so special.

I've served on Palo Alto's city council for four years now, and on the City's Planning and Transportation Commissions for three years before that. At 33 years old, I'm often the youngest person in the room when we discuss housing and how we're going to solve the affordability crisis. I completed my Master's degree in City Planning because I wanted to help solve problems like this, and worked as a city planner for many years. From all of that experience, I can tell you that local municipalities like Palo Alto are incapable of solving the housing crisis - we simply have too many rules, too much process, too much engagement (and I know it's impolitic to write that!)... and too little progress.

When local governments cannot, or will not, solve a problem of regional or state concern, then that is precisely when the state government should step in. I understand that the politics around housing are complex, but the solutions are not. If we want to maintain a diverse, inclusive, multi-generational society, then we must build more housing. Telling people to "go

somewhere else" is not an option. Super-commuting ruins our sustainability goals. And if we want to build more housing, then the best place to do it is near jobs and transit. It makes economic sense, environmental sense, and equity sense.

That's why I support SB50. I care more about the character of my community than I do about height limits. I care more about having young and old families living near each other than I care about parking or traffic. I care more about providing immigrants and newcomers access to great schools and jobs than I do about density limits. I care more about solving the climate crisis than I do about local control.

As a lifelong resident and now the Mayor of Palo Alto, as a young family man and working professional, as a trained city planner, as an environmentalist, and as someone committed to the future of this great state, I want to thank you for your hard work on this complex issue, and to send my encouragement and endorsement of SB50.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adrian Fine", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adrian Fine
Lifelong resident and Mayor of the City of Palo Alto