



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 10 2025

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am signing Senate Bill 79, which allows more housing to be built near major transit stops, with strong affordability, labor, and anti-displacement protections. At the same time, it gives local governments flexibility to adopt alternative plans, so long as they maintain equivalent housing capacity. This bill also includes protections for wildfire-prone areas so that new growth happens in places that are both sustainable and safe.

For too long, California has poured billions into transit without building the housing density needed for those systems to reach their potential. SB 79 helps change that by focusing more homes near rail stations — boosting ridership, cutting traffic and pollution, lowering household costs, and expanding access to jobs, schools, and services. This approach not only strengthens neighborhoods anchored by transit, it also protects taxpayer investments and begins to break the cycle of asking Californians to subsidize underutilized systems.

And far from limiting local control, the bill strengthens it. Cities and counties can craft their own alternative plans tailored to their communities or build on existing local policies, so long as they meet the baseline housing capacity required by this measure. This gives local governments the tools to take ownership of outcomes, with state law serving as a backstop if they fail to act.

Contrary to recent claims, this bill also has no impact on residents' ability to rebuild their homes that were damaged or destroyed by this January's wildfires. There are no qualifying transit stops within the burn scars of the Palisades or Eaton fires, and the measure includes additional safeguards for fire-prone areas, small cities under 35,000 residents, and unincorporated communities. Even if a

qualifying transit stop were added in the future, local governments still retain discretion to shift density elsewhere in their jurisdictions.

The world looks to California for leadership — it's time to build modern, connected communities that fulfill California's promise, meeting the needs of today and the next generation. The cost of inaction is simply too high.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Newsom', written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom