



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

June 1, 2023

The Honorable Luz Rivas
Chair, California State Assembly Natural Resources Committee
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 91 (Umberg) – SUPPORT
As Introduced January 17, 2023**

Dear Assembly Member Rivas:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we support Senate Bill 91 (Umberg), which makes permanent a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemption to create supportive and transitional housing. RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties.

California continues to have a severe housing supply and affordability issue. These issues make it even more difficult to effectively provide housing for the homeless. Addressing homelessness and providing affordable housing are high priorities for rural counties. Housing is often the first step to addressing the underlying causes of or avoiding homelessness. We supported SB 450 (Umberg) of 2019 which exempted from CEQA the conversion of existing motels and hotels to transitional and supportive housing units. We believe that this exemption is an important tool for local governments to increase the number transitional and supportive housing units available to low-income, at-risk, and homeless populations.

SB 91 seeks to extend the life of this important tool to create transitional and supportive housing units from the conversion of existing motels and hotels. These sites can easily be repurposed to provide affordable housing, which is sorely needed throughout the State. At the same time, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process can often add \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 to the cost of each project as well as open a project up to administrative and litigation delays. RCRC supports SB 91 as a common-sense effort to expedite the creation of interim supportive and transitional housing.

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For the above reasons, RCRC supports SB 91. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jkennedy@rcrcnet.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "J" and "K".

JOHN KENNEDY
Policy Advocate

cc: The Honorable Tom Umberg, Member of the California State Senate
Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Lawrence Lingbloom, Chief Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Casey Dunn, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus