



CITY COUNCILMEMBER
RIGEL ROBINSON
 DISTRICT 7

25

CONSENT CALENDAR
 February 22, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Rigel Robinson
 Subject: Support for AB 1602: Student Housing Revolving Loan Fund Act

RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, Senator Nancy Skinner, and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks in support of AB 1602, the California Student Housing Revolving Loan Fund Act of 2022.

BACKGROUND

Assembly Bill 1602, introduced by Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, would establish a revolving loan fund offering \$5 billion in zero-interest loans to facilitate the construction of affordable student, faculty, and staff housing for the University of California, the California State University, and the California Community Colleges. This funding would create approximately 25,000 beds of student housing at below market rents.

AB 1602 provides priority for campuses with a greater unmet demand for student housing, as well as projects with an accelerated construction timeline. The bill also includes requirements for the project to be within a five-mile radius of the campus and for at least 50% of student residents to meet the criteria for need-based financial assistance, with limited exceptions.

Nearly half of all students enrolled at the CSU and CCC, and 40% of students at the UC are low-income and struggle to afford the rising cost of attending college. College students throughout California face a drastic housing crisis — one that will continue to worsen if mandated enrollment growth is not coupled with an increase in student housing construction.

Despite UC Berkeley's efforts in recent years to build more on-campus student housing, more support from the state is critical. UC Berkeley has the lowest percentage of beds for its student body of any campus in the UC system.¹ This crisis affects not only students, but also long-term residents who face increased competition for housing, resulting in gentrification and displacement.

1

https://evcp.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/housing_master_plan_task_force_final_draft_january_2017.pdf

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

No impact.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Rigel Robinson, (510) 981-7170
Angie Chen, Legislative Assistant

Attachments:

1: Letter of support

2: Bill text

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1602

February 22, 2022

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Assemblymember, 7th District
State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: City of Berkeley's Support for Assembly Bill 1602

Dear Assemblymember Kevin McCarty,

The Berkeley City Council would like to convey our full support for Assembly Bill 1602, which would provide much-needed funding for efforts to alleviate California's student housing crisis.

The City of Berkeley is home to UC Berkeley, which, like many other UC, CSU, and CCC campuses across California, suffers from a severe undersupply of student housing and struggles to guarantee on-campus housing for its undergraduate students. UC Berkeley students are also impacted by the regional Bay Area housing crisis, meaning that securing affordable off-campus housing is not much easier. This puts gentrification and displacement pressure on long-term residents.

Despite the campus administration's efforts in recent years to build more student housing, more support from the state is critical. The \$5 billion in zero-interest loans provided by AB 1602 represent a solution that matches the scale of the problem. The City particularly appreciates your commitment to ensuring that the housing built is below local market rental rates, and that campuses with a greater unmet demand for student housing may be prioritized.

The Berkeley City Council strongly supports AB 1602 and thanks you for being a champion on this important issue.

Sincerely,

The Berkeley City Council

CC: Senator Nancy Skinner
Assemblymember Buffy Wicks

