



CITY OF PALM DESERT

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

The Honorable Juan Carrillo
Chair, Assembly Committee on Local Government
1021 O Street, Suite 4320
Sacramento, CA 95814

April 11, 2024

RE: AB 2485 (CARRILLO) – INCREASING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCURACY OF THE REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Carrillo:

On behalf of the City of Palm Desert, I am pleased to write in support of Assembly Bill (AB) 2485, which seeks to ensure an accurate and transparent Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) determination.

The RHNA is a state-mandated, local program in which California communities plan for housing to welcome all current and future residents resulting from population, employment, and housing growth. At the beginning of this process, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) provides a RHNA determination to each Council of Governments (COG) region in California. The COGs receive the RHNA determination from HCD and develop a methodology to distribute the need to individual cities and counties, which must then plan for their share of the regional need by updating the Housing Elements of their General Plans.

Given the importance of the RHNA program to alleviate the state's housing crisis, accompanied by the sheer magnitude of needed housing compared to what has been built in the past, there is a severe risk to the credibility of the process if it is insufficiently transparent, credible, and robust. AB 2485 would mitigate such risks by improving the development of the RHNA determination by ensuring its accuracy and transparency in two pivotal ways. First, AB 2485 would establish procedures for HCD to publicize its data sources, analyses, and methodology before finalizing a region's regional determination. Second, AB 2485 requires HCD to establish and convene a panel of experts to advise the department on its assumptions, data, and analyses before making its final determination on a region.

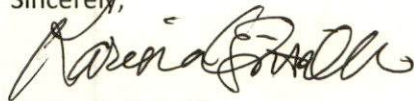
The implications of basing a local Housing Element on an inaccurate RHNA determination are significant. It could lead to unaccounted-for housing units, resulting in a failure to meet the housing needs of our communities.

This outcome is made even more critical given that RHNA accounts for future growth as well as current needs. In a March 2022 letter to the Legislature, the California State Auditor found that two of the three COG regions it studied had received underassessed housing needs. Therefore, it is imperative that the determinations provided to each region and the housing allocation supplied to each jurisdiction be as

accurate as possible, while ensuring that the communities using these numbers are confident in that accuracy.

We are grateful for your attention to this matter, Chair Carrillo. Palm Desert is committed to the RHNA policy goals of AB 2485, and we are pleased to support this critical bill. We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to work with you and your staff on ensuring its successful passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karina Quintanilla". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "Q".

Karina Quintanilla
Mayor, City of Palm Desert