November 11, 2026

The Honorable Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
Senator, 28th District
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 9581

RE: Senate Bill 16, Accessory Dwelling Construction Reform Act – Support

Dear Senator Smallwood-Cuevas and Members of the California State Senate,

On behalf of our member employers, the California Chamber of Commerce respectfully **supports** Senate Bill 16. SB 16 lets cities approve up to two detached accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on a lot with a single-family home and speeds up approval for plans that have already been reviewed. It does this without any new state spending and without adding taxes, fees, or requirements on employers.

Housing costs are a workforce issue. When workers cannot find housing they can afford near their jobs, employers lose people to higher turnover and have a harder time hiring. ADUs add homes on lots that are already built, so they can add housing in places where workers already live and work. SB 16 makes it easier to build more of them.

It allows up to two detached ADUs on a lot. Under Section 65852.27(b), a local agency must approve or deny an application for up to two detached ADUs ministerially, without discretionary review. This raises the limit from one detached ADU to two. The existing standards for these ADUs, such as setbacks, height, size, and parking, stay the same.

It speeds up approval for plans that were already reviewed. Under subdivision (b), a local agency must approve or deny an application within 30 days of receiving a completed application if it uses a plan the agency preapproved or a plan identical to one it approved earlier in the same building code cycle. Under subdivision (a), local agencies run a program to preapprove ADU plans, post approved plans on their websites, and may charge the same permitting fees they charge today. Faster and more predictable approvals lower costs for homeowners, small builders, and contractors.

It adds no cost to the state or to local governments. SB 16 is non-fiscal and is not a state-mandated local program. It works through the process cities already use to review ADU applications, and it places no new fees or duties on businesses.

It applies across the state. Subdivision (d) states that housing supply is a statewide concern, so the section applies to all cities, including charter cities. This means the same clear rules apply to builders and property owners wherever they work.

Senate Bill 16 is a practical, low-cost step toward more housing near jobs and a stronger workforce. For these reasons, the California Chamber of Commerce supports SB 16 and respectfully urges the Senate to vote in favor of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Aishah Apalara

Aishah Apalara (She/Her/Hers) - Lobbyist

CalChamber