

Message to Fire Chiefs (California Fire Chiefs Association & LA County Fire Dept.)

Following up re SB 50

Chris Spitz <ppfriends3@hotmail.com>

Wed 1/22/2020 8:56 AM

To: mikemclaughlin@calchiefs.org; dosby@fire.lacounty.gov

Cc: davidcard22@gmail.com; bisnoff@gmail.com;

Dear Chiefs McGlaughlin and Osby:

Please allow me to try and explain a further problem with the confusing language of SB 50, relative to whether there is (or should be) a clear exemption for all VHFHSZ parcels in SB 50 (in particular the "exception to the exception" language).

In one section of the bill (Sec. 64913.5(b)(3)), there is an inconspicuous/easily-overlooked reference to a *different* section of the Govt. Code (Sec. 64913.4(a)(6)(D)) which in turn contains an exemption for VHFHSZ parcels (with an "exception to the exception") for *another purpose* (streamlining of land use applications). We understand that SB 50's author may be suggesting that this oblique cross-reference to an exception in *another* Govt. Code section (for another purpose) is also intended to apply to the SB 50 "up-zoning" mandate (allowing four-plexes by right on all single-family parcels).

Even assuming that it's clear there is an exemption for all VHFHSZ parcels in SB 50 by virtue of Sec. 64913.4 -- and we don't believe it's at all clear -- that still doesn't "solve" the serious public safety problem.

Sec. 64913.4 contains the ambiguous "exception to the exception," which basically says that structures built in accordance with "fire hazard mitigation measures" (undefined) will NOT be exempt. But even if it is built to be fire-resistant (i.e., with fire hazard mitigation measures), **a four-plex on a VHFHSZ parcel will still add density** (four dwelling units, many more people living there) which means *many more people needing to flee during wildfire evacuations* (regardless of whether the structures themselves are fire-resistant), clogging our narrow streets and making already-difficult evacuations -- not to mention the difficulty in getting fire equipment into the fire area -- even more difficult (thus risking, to an even greater degree than is already present, the lives & safety of residents & firefighters alike).

We respectfully request that you bring this message as soon as possible to the attention of the officials at Cal Chiefs and/or LA County Fire who are reviewing the bill's language. For your information, we are told that the Senators may now be discussing possible bill amendments, prior to scheduling a floor vote (which again must take place by January 31).

We believe that SB 50 should be amended to include a *clear exemption* from the bill's increased density mandates for **all VHFHSZ parcels, without exception**. We hope that the Cal Chiefs and LA County Fire will agree and convey this conclusion to the Senators at the **earliest possible opportunity**.

Thank you again for your assistance with this very important public safety issue.

Best regards,

Chris Spitz
PPCC