



MAYOR REX RICHARDSON

September 13, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 1046 (Lowenthal)—Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act: Exemptions

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I urge your signature on AB 1046 related to modernizing the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. The City is proud to sponsor this legislation, to ensure that fire and life-safety improvements, as well as seismic retrofitting, are permissible for certain projects in earthquake fault zones.

The intent of the Alquist-Priolo Act is to reduce losses from surface fault ruptures, and dozens of agencies in California are mandated by the state to regulate development projects within earthquake fault zones according to the provisions of the Alquist-Priolo Act. Many provisions in the Alquist-Priolo Act, however, are unclear and do not align with the current edition of the California Building Standards Code requirements and terminology, leading to confusion for local permitting agencies and applicants. Furthermore, the Alquist-Priolo Act caps investments in existing buildings to 50 percent of the value of the building, making it difficult to address core safety improvements related to fire and life-safety, ADA accessibility, and seismic retrofit.

AB 1046 aims to clarify provisions of the Alquist-Priolo Act and to align it with the California Building Standards Code. This will not only provide more clarity for local permitting agencies and applicants but also ensure that improvements to the overall safety and resiliency of existing seismically vulnerable buildings in earthquake fault zones can move forward.

This bill also updates the Alquist-Priolo Act to expand the list of seismically vulnerable buildings within earthquake fault zones that can be retrofitted without being capped at 50 percent of the value of the property. The Structural Engineering Association of California has identified a list of seismically vulnerable building types that have performed poorly in past earthquake events. Recognizing the need to address the potential loss of these existing buildings and the impact to the community, many local permitting agencies, including the City of Long Beach, are encouraging or mandating seismic retrofitting of these buildings. Expanding the list of seismically vulnerable buildings to facilitate investment in seismic retrofitting of these buildings will likely result in the largest improvement in reducing widespread life safety hazards and limiting structural damage.

For these reasons, the City requests your signature on AB 1046.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Richardson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mayor Rex Richardson
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 65th District
The Honorable Josh Lowenthal, State Assembly, 69th District