



June 15, 2018

The Honorable Jim Beall
Chair, Senate Transportation and Housing Committee
State Capitol Building, Room 2082
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2681 (Seismic safety: potentially vulnerable buildings)

NOTICE OF OPPOSITION

Dear Chair Beall:

California Building Officials (CALBO) and the League of California Cities (League) regretfully oppose AB 2681 (Nazarian). This bill would require each building department, of a city or county, to create an inventory of potentially vulnerable buildings within its jurisdiction, based on age and other publicly available information. This inventory would then be submitted to the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) for review of compliance standards.

As background, the League represents 474 of California's cities while CALBO represents local city and county governments throughout the entire state of California. CALBO members are primarily responsible for enforcing building code requirements in an estimated 95% of the buildings constructed in the state. Collectively, our Members ensure that the proper public health and structural safety requirements, codes, and standards are adhered to within our jurisdiction. Together, we protect the citizens we serve and the overall safety of the public.

CALBO and the League appreciate the good intentions of the author as well as the efforts of the Seismic Resiliency Initiative workgroup. However; we are strongly opposed to a statewide mandate contained within the bill, and feel that such a universal requirement will pose major compliance problems for many local jurisdictions. California's local governments reflect the diversity of our great state, and many of the building departments are too small to carry out the provisions set forth in AB 2681. Further, adding a new system and program to an already burdened agency and department will create staffing and financial difficulties. The entire system and process created by AB 2681 is an onerous task to be passed on to local government.

As of the May 25 amendments, the bill has not identified a funding mechanism for this program, or its maintenance, which places an additional burden on the local building departments and building owners. Currently, the language only calls for Cal OES to *identify funding* instead of actually having to secure a funding source for this statewide program.

Securing this funding source would be crucial for local governments to finance such a large undertaking. The way the language is currently drafted allows for Cal OES to identify funding, even if such funding is unavailable for this program.

AB 2681 would mandate that each building department not only identify and create an inventory of “potentially vulnerable buildings” in its jurisdiction, but also inform each owner that his/her building has been identified as such, update the building inventory, and track all existing documents relating to identified buildings. Requiring local building departments to take on this responsibility would increase staff and administrative costs without sufficient resources to actually make these buildings safer.

CALBO and the League support local jurisdictions that have adopted their own seismic ordinances. These ordinances allow local agencies and their expert building officials to modify local standards to meet the needs of the region and the community. CALBO’s six-point policy maintains that the state should establish minimum standards and local entities can apply more stringent standards based on their discretion.

CALBO and the League appreciate the willingness of Assembly Member Nazarian to engage our membership and we understand the merits of seismic resiliency efforts. We support them. However; with the statewide mandate to be placed on all California building departments, we must hold a strong OPPOSE to the measure. We appreciate your understanding of our position.

Sincerely,



Sharon Goei, P.E., C.B.O.
First Vice President
California Building Officials



Rony Berdugo
Legislative Representative
League of California Cities

cc: The Honorable Adrin Nazarian
Members of the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee
Randy Chinn, Chief Consultant, Senate Transportation & Housing Committee
Ted Morley, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus