

AB 68 (Ward): The Housing and Climate Solutions Act

AB 68 will make it easier to build more housing near jobs, grocery stores, transit and other resources, while protecting critical natural and working lands.

Californians are increasingly pushed away from job centers and into areas vulnerable to wildfires and flooding to find housing they can afford.

- Local policies that restrict multifamily infill housing in existing neighborhoods near jobs, schools, and other resources force Californians into long commutes from increasingly remote areas.
- From 1990 to 2010, [half of all new housing development](#) in California took place at the boundary of wildlands, which are more susceptible to wildfires and floods.
- Around a quarter of Californians now live in areas at high risk of burning in a wildfire.

Development in California's natural lands increases carbon emissions and degrades natural resources that make us more resilient to climate change.

- Forests, grasslands, and rangelands [absorb about 25%](#) of carbon emissions, which contribute to climate change.
- Wetlands store flood waters, filter surface water, and serve as natural reservoirs. The destruction of wetlands can increase catastrophic [damages](#) from storms and flooding.
- Development that fragments open spaces can reduce natural barriers between homes and disasters, like wildfires and floods, and threaten biodiversity.
- Sprawl is one of the [leading causes](#) of rising transportation emissions in California.

Communities of color and lower-income Californians are disproportionately impacted by both the housing and climate crisis.

- Many neighborhoods with access to transit, good schools, green spaces, and other resources prohibit multi-family housing that is often more affordable for people of color and low-income families.
- Low income and minority communities are [more likely to struggle to adapt to and recover from wildfires](#) because they have less wealth and fewer resources.

Focusing efforts to build new homes in climate-safe areas will:

keep Californians out of harm's way, reduce emissions, help to protect natural and working lands, and create more equitable, sustainable, and affordable housing.

AB 68

- Makes it faster, cheaper, and easier to build more homes in areas already identified by local governments as priority locations for new housing.
- Enables more Californians to live where they want by streamlining approvals and increasing capacity for multi-family housing in high-opportunity areas within walking distance of resources like parks, transit, and grocery stores.
- Requires local governments to focus new housing within existing communities before sprawling into natural and working lands prone to wildfires and flooding and critical for climate resilience.