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November 8, 2024

Director Gustavo Velasquez
California Department of Housing & Community Development
651 Bannon Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Director Velasquez:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed "Vela" project, a 23-story mixed-use development in the Pacific Beach community of the city of San Diego. This project, which includes 213 units, allocates only 35% for housing, with a mere 5% designated as affordable housing for low-income and moderate-income residents. The majority of the units are intended for visitor accommodations, raising serious concerns about the project's true purpose.

This proposal is misusing state density bonus laws to effectively create a hotel rather than addressing the critical housing shortage we face. Instead of lowering housing costs, the influx of short-term accommodations will drive up the cost of living for our residents. I voted against the State Density Bonus Law last year due to concerns about potential exploitation of these regulations. If this project moves forward, it may necessitate a closer examination of our legislative approach to ensure that these laws truly benefit our communities.

Density bonus waivers should not be granted to developments that prioritize visitor-serving units over affordable housing. This outcome is contrary to the intentions of the state, and I respectfully urge HCD to offer clear guidance that will empower the city of San Diego to reject any misuse of Density Bonus Laws.

I trust that we can work together to uphold the integrity of our housing policies.

Sincerely,

TASHA BOERNER
CA State Assemblymember
77th Assembly District