[Place on your letterhead or include your address block]

[Insert Date]

The Honorable Tony Thurmond

California State Assembly

State Capitol, Room 4005

P.O. Box 942849

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re:  Support for AB 45**

Dear Assemblymember Thurmond,

[Insert your organization's name] is writing to voice our support of AB 45, which will provide much needed financial resources to our school districts so that they can recruit and retain the best school district employees and improve educational outcomes for our students.

[Include 1-2 sentences to briefly describe your organization.] As a member of the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH), [your organization] joins with 750 affordable housing developers, advocates, community leaders and businesses, working to secure resources, promote good policy, educate the public, and support affordable homes as the foundation for thriving individuals, families and neighborhoods.

**Our students are suffering as schools struggle to retain and recruit teachers, exacerbated by our state’s high cost of housing.**

School districts throughout California, and especially in the Bay Area, struggle with recruiting and retaining staff and teachers, largely due to a shortage of affordable housing within the districts these employees teach and work.

This year alone, the average rental price in Oakland increased by 13.7 percent to $2,806 per month. Yet teachers and school employees, like other civil servants, are paid based on available state funding and not on market pressures, making it difficult to pay wages to match the local housing market. Teacher turnover is harmful to our students and their ability to receive a good education. According to the Center for Education Policy Analysis at Stanford University, teacher turnover has a significant and negative impact on the achievement of students, especially in schools with large populations of low-performing and minority students. These schools have seen a rise in the number of temporary permits, waivers, and intern credentials issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

**AB 45 provides a tool that can be used by school districts in order to increase recruitment and retention** by creating more affordable housing options for school employees and teachers.

Specifically, AB 45 will create a program that will provide $100 million financial assistance to school districts to help fund the predevelopment and development of housing for school employees and teachers.

Teacher housing provides a creative tool that school districts can use in order to attract and retain new, qualified teachers. We are already seeing improved teacher retention in districts using similar models, including in Los Angeles and Santa Clara. AB 45 would provide much-needed financial assistance to school districts that that wish to emulate Santa Clara and Los Angeles by developing in-district housing for their own school employees.

This proposal will:

* Provide predevelopment assistance, excluding costs for land acquisition, to developers who have partnered with qualified school districts.
* Provide development funds to developers that partner with a qualifying school district.
* Ensure long term affordability for future school district employees by requiring that any development funded by this program must remain affordable for 55 years.

Thank you for your leadership in drafting legislation that provides school districts with a valuable tool to recruit and retain the best school district employees, create more affordable housing for our teachers and school employees, and improve educational outcomes for our students. We look forward to working with you to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

[Insert Your Full Name]

[Insert Your Title]

[Insert Your Organization’s Name]

To: Rodolfo E. Rivera Aquino, Office of Asm. TonyThurmond (rodolfo.riveraaquino@asm.ca.gov)

Cc: Pedro Galvao, Regional Planning and Policy Manager, NPH (pedro@nonprofithousing.org)