**Letter Instructions:**

**Email your letter to:** Melanie Morelos, Legislative Director, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (melanie.morelos@asm.ca.gov) and Cc: Pedro Galvao, NPH Policy Director (pedro@nonprofithousing.org)

**And submit to:** [https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/](https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/%20) (note that your organization will need to create a free account)

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**Letter Template:**

*[Place on your letterhead or include your address block]*

*[Insert Date]*

The Honorable Buffy Wicks

California State Assembly

State Capitol, Room 5160

Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Support for AB 528 (Abandoned Lots and Properties into Opportunity Act)**

Dear Assemblymember Wicks,

*[Insert your organization's name]* is voicing our strong support for **AB 528 (Wicks), which will remove blighted properties from neighborhoods, give affordable housing developers an opportunity to build in more places, and remove tax delinquent properties from the County ledger.**

We believe that **by investing and maintaining the affordability of housing, we protect our long-standing communities from gentrification and displacement.**

*[Include 1-2 sentences to briefly describe your organization: You may include how many people you serve and where, how many people you employ and where, etc.]*

**The COVID-19 pandemic continues to cripple our state, drive unemployment, and push renters closer to the brink of homelessness.** It is critical that we keep tenants housed, homeowners out of collapse, and in the event that a second home falls into tax delinquency, that those properties be converted into affordable housing while keeping existing tenants housed.

Currently, California law gives non-profit affordable housing developers and public agencies the first option to purchase tax defaulted properties three years after tax delinquency through the Chapter 8 Tax Defaulted Property sale. However, this process is extremely underutilized. **According to the State Controller only 55 tax delinquent properties statewide have been repurposed as affordable housing over the past 10 years.**

AB 528, the Abandoned Lots and Properties into Opportunity Act, **removes blighted properties from neighborhoods, turns abandoned homes into affordable housing, gives non-profits access to affordable properties to develop, and removes tax delinquent properties from the County ledgers, all while keeping existing tenants housed.**

AB 528 will modernize and update the existing and cumbersome Chapter 8 process by:

* Increasing the **length of required affordability from 30 years to 55 years.**
* Incentivizing cities and county tax collectors to work together and with non-profit affordable housing developers to **incentivize blighted properties to be converted to affordable housing.**
* Giving tenants an **opportunity to purchase the property first before it goes into tax sale and guaranteeing tenants replacement units** at rents or sales prices affordable to them if the property is redeveloped as affordable housing.
* **Reducing the time it takes** for a nonprofit or public agency to acquire a tax defaulted property.
* Requiring a **timely application process.**
* Creating a **statewide list of available properties** for affordable housing preservation and development.
* Directing the State Controller’s Office to work with Counties to develop a **standardized process**.

Thank you for your leadership in drafting legislation that will **create hundreds, if not thousands, of affordable housing opportunities throughout the state, while strengthening neighborhoods, municipal budgets, and non-profit organizations.**

*[INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION HERE]* strongly supports AB 528 and encourages the Legislature to pass this important bill. As a member of the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH), we look forward to working with you to pass this critical legislation.

Respectfully,

*[Insert Your Full Name]*

*[Insert Your Title]*

*[Insert Your Organization’s Name]*