

From: WAKE UP CALIFORNIA amylkalish@249826007.mailchimpapp.com
Subject: WAKE UP CA Newsletter #4 - May 8, 2026
Date: May 8, 2026 at 9:55:26 PM
To: amylkalish@gmail.com



Newsletter Number 4

RHNA IS UNSUBSTANTIATED

WWW.WAKECA.ORG

Affordability, Safety, and Local Accountability

. . .

MONDAY ZOOM RECAP

WAKE UP focused on how California's housing targets are created, and how the 6th RHNA cycle dramatically increased numbers and expanded state pressure on cities. The startling change spurred a state audit, which was a fail, but the numbers didn't change. Even after the California Department of Finance released updated projections (last year) showing our population basically flat out to 2060, the numbers didn't budge the 2.5 million unit mandate.

"Why is the HCD allowed to hold cities to mandates that are demonstrably false, and rigidly enforced?"

Want a deeper dive?

[VIEW SLIDE DECK HERE](#)



• • •

OPEN LETTER

SBCCOG Heralds the Call for RHNA Reform

Communities are struggling to reconcile state mandates with aging infrastructure, rising costs, evacuation concerns, and local service limitations.

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG), representing 18 South Bay (Southern CA) localities, recently released a major letter calling

for RHNA to be replaced with a framework focused on affordability, safety, infrastructure realities, mobility, and implementation.



FROM THE LETTER

"We think that the gubernatorial and legislative elections are a good time to let people know that facts matter and working together and not through mandates from the state, we need to find strategies that allow everyone to have a chance for housing that they can afford without destroying the wonderful communities that have been established throughout the state..."

It is not helpful to demonize cities and their city councils who are elected by their communities to represent them. We want to partner with the state and look for solutions, not receive unrealistic mandates.

*Our voters may not understand the complex policies that force them to adjust to a 400 DU apartment on their corner, but they will support a candidate with the courage to stop it and replace it with something like the rational process we are proposing. They want to participate through city hall, not a distant bureaucracy. **We are confident that there are grassroots organizations that will actively support a candidate taking on this issue.**"*

[Read the full SBCCOG letter →](#)

UPCOMING EVENT — FRIDAY, MAY 15

CAROLYN M. SCOTT'S
Award-winning Documentary Film

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL
THE QUEST TO SAVE THE VALLEY OF THE MOON

FREE 90 MINUTE EVENT: FILM SHOWING AND TOWN HALL

HESSE PARK ~ RANCHO PALOS VERDES

FRIDAY MAY 15 6:30 ~ 8:00

With Elected Officials and Guests

Mike Griffiths, former Torrance elected, California Cities for Local Control

Amy Kalish, WAKE UP CALIFORNIA

This award-winning film highlights a fierce battle in rural, fire-prone Sonoma, as a community fights a massive luxury development that ignores critical safety and evacuation concerns. This struggle resonates deeply with challenges we face.

SAVE OUR CITIES!



Sponsored by WAKE UP CALIFORNIA, a 501(c)4
advocating for safe and sensible housing policy

<https://www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/small.html>



Small Is Beautiful highlights a conflict that is neither small nor beautiful. It exposes how developers use California's affordable housing mandates as a 'Trojan Horse' to build luxury units in a critical wildlife corridor in Sonoma County. By ignoring the increasing wildfire risks of climate change, these projects threaten to turn rural landscapes into inescapable death traps for both current and future residents.

— Jonathan Fink, Professor of Geology, Portland State University; Founder, Cascadia Wildfire and Urban Smoke Working Group

[Watch the trailer & learn more →](#)

• • •

BY THE NUMBERS

The Outrageous Price of a Housing Element

Ever wonder what it costs a city to assemble a Housing Element — *just to get to its **first submission** to HCD?* Researcher Ann Duwe followed up with 17 California cities through Public Records Act requests to find out. **These numbers are for consultant and legal fees only**, and do not include in-house staff or legal hours. The results so far:

CHART 4

What 6th-cycle Housing Element compliance costs cities

17 California cities, billed services through first HCD submission.

City	Population	Cost	Attorney fees*
Corte Madera	10,141	\$389,800	\$21,000
Los Altos	30,700	\$600,228	\$13,235
Los Altos Hills	8,489	\$190,600	\$28,696
Mill Valley	14,105	\$65,000	—
Mission Viejo	92,449	\$194,845	—
Monte Sereno	3,396	\$193,291	—
Oceanside	172,982	\$362,832	—
Palo Alto	66,680	\$206,084	—
Palos Verdes Estates	—	\$250,000	—
Portola Valley	4,500	\$292,506	—
Rancho Palos Verdes	—	\$944,000	—
Richmond	110,567	\$280,253	—
Rolling Hills Estates	8,160	\$250,000	—
San Anselmo	12,693	\$247,000	\$37,000
Sunnyvale	155,805	\$235,000	—
Torrance	143,000	\$199,000	—
Yorba Linda	68,000	\$550,799	\$56,345
Totals (17 cities)	901,667 (15 reported)	\$5,451,238	\$156,276 (5 of 17)

Source: Public Records Act requests, compiled by Ann Duwe.
Costs include planning/zoning consultants billed through first submission of the Housing Element to HCD.
* Attorney fees were disclosed by only 5 of 17 cities in PRA responses, so the attorney column understates true cost. In-house staff time is not included.

WAKE UP PICKS — JUNE 2 PRIMARY

Three Favorites

Lori Brooke (D)

SAN FRANCISCO SUPERVISOR — DISTRICT 2



Only San Francisco can vote for Lori Brooke, but all of us can support her. A community-oriented activist, Lori co-founded Neighborhoods United SF to address housing affordability, and her platform calls for ensuring new projects "prioritize our neighborhoods, small businesses and needed infrastructure." She emphasizes holding city departments accountable for outcomes.

<https://www.loribrooke.com>

• • •

Connie Chan (D)

U.S. CONGRESS — CA-11



San Francisco Supervisor Connie Chan is challenging State Sen. Scott Wiener for Nancy Pelosi's congressional seat.

Chan supports low-income housing and preservation, not huge luxury development. She is an outspoken critic of Wiener's laws and policies, including streamlining and upzoning. It's time that someone takes solutions for our true affordable housing deficit to the national stage.

[Watch Connie Chan on YouTube →](#)

• • •

Damon Connolly (D)

CURRENT DISTRICT 12 ASSEMBLYMEMBER



Damon has excelled in the Assembly and he'll make a great Senator. In his first Assembly term he authored sensible and important legislation, created and chaired the Select Committee on Fire Prevention, and came through for us numerous times — bucking the supermajority to reject Wiener's SB 423, SB 610, and SB 79. He's a strong proponent of CEQA, and almost immediately after Newsom's poison-pill trailer bills last year (AB 130, CEQA carve-outs) wrote legislation to undo it. He's also come out against SB 131, which eliminated CEQA from advanced manufacturing. He listens, and confidently supports his constituents — and California.

damonconnolly.com →

ELECTION ENDORSEMENTS

CCLC Candidates' Questionnaire



California Cities for Local Control has polled all Senate, Assembly, and Gubernatorial candidates. The results are at the link below. *If candidates in your area haven't filled it out, please ask them to.*

[View the candidate endorsements →](#)

[Find your incumbent legislators →](#)

• • •

CALIFORNIA — SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

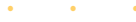
Worth a Look: **Gus Mattammal**

Gus Mattammal is running on a platform of education reform — author of *A is for Average: Why California Public Schools Struggle and How You Can Help*.

votegus.org →

COMING SOON

Next mailing will focus on candidates, including for Assembly District 12.



EVENT OF NOTE

SHIFT Bay Area Seminar

Saturday, May 16 — 10:00 AM

"Housing Mandates Are Out of Control"

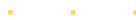
ZOOM WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL CANDIDATE MICHAEL GATES

Gates (R) joined a previous WAKE UP call on local control. As Huntington Beach City Attorney, he guided the city's filing of a RHNA lawsuit.

More information about Michael Gates: [read here →](#)

[shift-ba.org →](#)

[Join the Zoom →](#)



Monday Zooms Resume June 1st

NEWSLETTERS WILL CONTINUE

See you in June!

As we grow, so do our expenses.

Please consider a donation to help us continue our quality work.

DONATE

— *Amy Kalish, President and founder*

WAKE UP California — Mill Valley, CA

A volunteer-run 501(c)(4) nonprofit

wakeca.org — info.wakeupca@gmail.com — [Unsubscribe](#)

This email was sent to amykalish@gmail.com

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

WAKE UP CALIFORNIA · 35 Miller Ave PMB 574 · Mill Valley, CA 94941-1903 · USA