



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 6/24/2025

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File #: 25-825

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Supervisor Natalie Arroyo

**Agenda Section:** Initiated by Board Member

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**SUBJECT:**

Letter of Opposition to California Assembly Bill 306 (Schultz) Regarding Preemption of Local Building Code Updates and Climate Action Measures

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Chair of the Board to sign the attached letter of opposition to California Assembly Bill 306 (Schultz) regarding preemption of local building code updates and climate action measures; and
2. Authorize staff to continue advocacy on this issue and submitting letters of support throughout the life of California Assembly Bill 306 (Schultz); and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to send the attached letter of opposition to California Assembly Bill 306 (Schultz) to the Chair of the Senate Committee on Housing and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Local Government.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The recommended actions support the following areas of the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Plan:

Area of Focus: Sustainable Natural Resources & Infrastructure Stewardship

Strategic Plan Category: 5001 - Enhance climate adaptation landscapes and communities

**DISCUSSION:**

California Assembly Bill 306 ("AB 306") proposes to prohibit local governments from enforcing or adopting ordinances that impose requirements on new residential construction beyond the California Building Standards Code, as it exists on January 1, 2025. The bill aims to promote housing development by freezing additional local building-related regulations.

The County of Humboldt is actively developing ordinances under the Regional Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve climate resilience. Several of these ordinances, while not formally part of the Building Code, are intended to apply to new construction and could be jeopardized by AB 306.

While AB 306 may not directly override existing climate policies, its language is broad enough to invite legal challenges from

developers. Any local requirement impacting new residential buildings - such as energy performance standards, electrification readiness or water efficiency - could be argued as preempted, which could undermine the County of Humboldt's efforts to meet state-mandated climate goals.

AB 306 would lock jurisdictions into outdated building standards by freezing the enforceable code to what exists on January 1, 2025. This precludes adoption of new requirements from the 2026 California Building Standards Code and beyond which are expected to include more rigorous climate adaptation and greenhouse gas reduction measures. If enacted, this freeze could impair progress for multiple future building code cycles.

AB 306 directly conflicts with the implementation of California Senate Bill 32, California Assembly Bill 32 and related statutes, which rely heavily on local innovation and regulatory authority to achieve emissions reductions. Local governments are being asked to take stronger action to prepare for and respond to climate change - AB 306 sends the opposite signal by restricting their tools to do so.

While AB 306 is framed as a pro-housing measure, there is little evidence that preempting local environmental, or efficiency standards will lead to meaningful increases in housing supply. AB 306 may instead lead to lower-quality, less efficient, less-resilient housing stock that increases long-term environmental and economic costs.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

General Fund

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There are no direct costs associated with the recommended actions currently before the Board. However, the long-term impacts of AB 306 could reduce the County of Humboldt's ability to comply with state climate mandates, potentially resulting in regulatory risk, delayed implementation of Regional Climate Action Plan measures and increased future adaptation costs.

**STAFFING IMPACT:**

The recommended actions will not impact current staffing levels.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

None

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Board discretion.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Letter of Opposition to California Assembly Bill 306 (Schultz) Regarding Preemption of Local Building Code Updates and Climate Action Measures
2. Bill Text for California Assembly Bill 306 (Schultz)

**PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:**

Meeting of: None

File No.: None