



May 1, 2019

Hon. Nancy Skinner
California State Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

OPPOSE - SB 293 (Skinner) Oakland Waterfront Infrastructure Financing

Dear Senator Skinner,

On behalf of Kingdom Builders Christian Fellowship, I, the undersigned, am a part of a coalition of faith leaders, neighborhood groups, and residents who have been a part of the East Oakland community for decades and are strongly opposed to SB 293 (Skinner). We are in opposition to the bill's intent to finance an infrastructure development for a new Oakland A's stadium at Howard Terminal, which would leave behind the neighborhoods that have supported the team for decades.

The measure facilitates a detrimental plan to move economic development away from East Oakland, an area that is in critical need of economic investment, despite the significant infrastructure and socioeconomic cost East Oakland devoted to the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum when first constructed. The bill ultimately abandons our neighborhoods and the potential for substantial community growth for the construction of luxury, waterfront homes that current residents cannot afford.

The Coliseum has been home to the Oakland A's since they played their first game there in 1968, and both the stadium and the team are integrally tied to East Oakland's identity and history. In particular, the Coliseum brought with it initial promises of new public transit and affordable housing that justified using eminent domain to displace East Oakland residents several decades ago. East Oakland residents were led to believe that a new sports franchise would elevate the East Oakland community and the city.

SB 293 disregards this crucial component of East Oakland's history with its intent to develop Howard Terminal instead of redeveloping the current stadium site in East Oakland despite our need for affordable housing and good-paying jobs. By not prioritizing affordable housing in Oakland – and East Oakland specifically – neighbors, friends, and families who cannot keep up with rapidly growing Bay Area housing prices may be priced out.

Instead of forcing a choice between the well-being of current Oakland residents and a world-class stadium suitable for the Oakland A's, there is the ideal option of redeveloping and investing the existing Coliseum and the East Oakland community. Having the Oakland A's remain where they are with additional housing and commercial real estate will honor the sacrifice the East Oakland community made all those years ago. East Oakland deserves the revitalization a world-class stadium surrounded by housing, shopping, restaurants and entertainment could bring.

With this in mind, we strongly oppose SB 293 and ask that you consider our concerns regarding East Oakland residents and instead endorse a revitalization plan in an area that needs it most.

Sincerely,

Pastor L.J. Jennings,
Senior Pastor
Kingdom Builders Christian Fellowship