



September 6, 2017

The Honorable Steven Bradford
Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 789 (Bradford) California Environmental Quality Act: Olympic Games: Sport and Entertainment Project: Eminent Domain-- OPPOSE

Dear Senator Bradford:

The undersigned public interest organizations who collectively represent over 1 million Californians must oppose your bill, SB 789, which would create an unnecessary, sweeping exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), limit judicially available remedies for potential plaintiffs in a CEQA suit, and authorize eminent domain proceedings for a project which has not yet completed review. These exemptions are not needed. Both projects this bill is intended to benefit, the Clippers Arena and Olympic Games, are not starting until 2024 and 2028 respectively. There is ample time to go through the CEQA process.

CEQA provides public disclosure about environmental impacts of a project, and mitigation of those impacts. It is critical to ensuring environmentally friendly development that protects public health.

CEQA exemptions for the Olympic Games in SB 789 are unnecessary and damaging. As stated, the games do not start until 2028, providing a full decade to plan out projects, publicly disclose their impacts, and provide mitigation. The bill also is vague, potentially allowing *any* transportation project that could help raise funds for the games, even if they don't actually serve the Games. Transportation projects have numerous impacts, including air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that should be mitigated.

The bill also limits judicial action regarding the Clippers Arena. Like the Olympics, this project has plenty of time to go through CEQA processes. SB 789 allows the Clippers Arena to ignore aesthetic and

parking impacts, while using lessened standards with regards to finding traffic and GHG impacts. This could lead to poorer analysis and impacts to the environment and public health. SB 789 also limits the ability for injunctive relief, meaning that flawed analysis and public harms cannot be adequately stopped.

Finally, the allowance to begin eminent domain before environmental review is completed sets bad precedent. Eminent domain proceedings are costly and controversial, and a project should have completed necessary legal permitting before entering into these proceedings. Environmental review may require changes to projects that may make some parcel acquisition unnecessary making eminent domain before environmental review premature.

SB 789 will limit public review, and increase environmental harms in communities. We ask for you to rescind this unnecessary bill.

Sincerely,

Kyle Jones
Policy Advocate
Sierra Club California

Susan Jordan
Executive Director
California Coastal Protection Network

David Pettit
Senior Attorney
Natural Resources Defense Council

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Joshua Stark
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TransForm

Bill Magavern
Policy Director
Coalition for Clean Air

Greg Suba
Conservation Director
California Native Plant Society

Cc: Assembly Committees on Natural Resources and Local Government members and staff