

March 13, 2019

The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 5050  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Support – SB 329 – Discrimination: housing: source of income.**

Senator Mitchell,

I write on behalf of California YIMBY to support Senate Bill 329, which would establish that federal housing assistance vouchers issued under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 are to be considered income for the purposes of the state ban on income source discrimination.

California YIMBY is a statewide organization of 60,000 neighbors who welcome more neighbors. We believe that an equitable California begins with abundant, secure, affordable housing. We focus on housing and land use policy at the state and local level to ensure grassroots organizers and city leaders have the tools they need to accelerate home building, fight displacement, and fight for a California for everyone.

According to the most recent HUD estimates, housing choice voucher holders nationwide were successful in finding housing only 69 percent of the time, with that number falling to 61 percent in tighter housing markets, such as California's, revealing possible discrimination against voucher holding tenants. This discrimination has a disparate racial impact, and some evidence suggests that discrimination against housing choice voucher holders is intentionally a proxy for discrimination on race, which is illegal.

SB 329 would make it unlawful for a landlord to refuse tenancy to someone on the basis they hold a housing choice voucher. This method is proven to increase the rate at which voucher holders can find housing; one national study found it increased housing rates by 12 percent, according to the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society.

We therefore support SB 329 and thank you for giving the issue of housing the importance it deserves.

Thank you,



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(Sources indicated on following page)

Sources:

1. Meryl Finkel and Larry Buron, "Study on Section 8 Voucher Success Rates," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2001, [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/pdf/sec8success\\_1.pdf](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/pdf/sec8success_1.pdf).
2. "Preventing Source of Income Discrimination." Haas Institute. [https://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/belongingrichmond-sourceofincomediscrimination#footnote101\\_01u2gyx](https://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/belongingrichmond-sourceofincomediscrimination#footnote101_01u2gyx). Accessed 3/13/19.