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Newsom Says SB 50 is "Struggling" and Flawed

Gov. Gavin Newsom today on KPCC criticized controversial Senate Bill 50 by state Sen. Scott Wiener, which would allow luxury apartment towers to march across single-family neighborhoods from working-class East Los Angeles and Van Nuys to affluent Beverly Hills.

SB 50, which would encourage developers to buy up and demolish some 3,000 thriving California neighborhoods, "is struggling," the governor said. Newsom criticized key aspects of SB 50, which has been widely ridiculed as a "demolition derby" that fails to create affordable housing.

Among other things, Newsom said, "the bill is struggling," because of its "one size fits all" approach in a state where "communities are different." He noted that Wiener "had this [problem] last year when he had a similar bill" — the quickly defeated SB 827.

Reaction to Newsom was swift in L.A.'s diverse working-class and middle-class areas, many of which would be doomed by SB 50's unprecedented concept of tearing down communities where families buy "starter homes" to make way for costly towers.

Robby G. Davis, a board member of Park Mesa Heights Community Council in South L.A., said, "We cannot countenance the passage of Senate Bill 50. It's a travesty to be announced as providing affordable housing, because what it really does is denigrate the community, and it will destroy the character of the community as it we know it."

Alejandro Palomino, a leader with Frogtown Residents Opposing Gentrification, who has fought luxury developers trying to take over his Latino working-class community, said, "Hopefully this will help the movement to stop SB 50. It will influence other legislators to oppose it."

Davis, explaining why Wiener's idea is fatally flawed, said, "We have seniors walking and children playing on our sidewalks. That is why we chose to live here, that is the legacy we wish to leave behind. We are poster children for a transit-oriented community. The onslaught of developers, coupled with SB 50, will destroy us. There is no way we can survive."

She said single-family homes replaced by luxury towers consisting of one-bedroom and studio apartments is "not affordable family housing."

The bill will be voted on April 24 by a state Senate committee. It recently sailed through

the Housing Committee, shocking many communities.

Are you in a Scott Wiener demolition zone? See [Map link here](#)