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ORANGE COUNTY COASTKEEPER®



March 28, 2024

Honorable Dave Min  
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee 1021 O Street, Ste. 6710  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1092 (Blakespear) OPPOSE

Honorable Dave Min  
Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee 1021 O Street, Ste. 6710  
Sacramento, CA 95814

SB 1077 (Blakespear): OPPOSE

Dear Senator Min,

We the undersigned organizations submit these comments to respectfully oppose Senate Bill 1077. Our organizations have decades of experience advocating on coastal and ocean protection and equitable access to California's 1,100 miles of beloved shoreline. We are deeply concerned that our bedrock coastal access and resource protection law in California - the California Coastal Act of 1976 - is under siege.

Approved by the Legislature in 1976, the Coastal Act protects public access to our iconic and public coastline. The Legislature declared the law as necessary to ensure "the permanent protection of the state's natural and scenic resources" which it describes as a "paramount concern to present and future residents of the state and nation." Californians dearly value the natural beauty of our coastal zone and the hollowing out of the Coastal Act is a threat to one of our state's greatest public trust resources — the beach — which is a respite from heat associated with climate change, and a source of mental and physical well being for all Californians.

Bills such as SB 1077 (Blakespear) would chip away at the Coastal Act by exempting the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) from the purview of the Coastal Commission, which was created by voters in 1972 and authorized by the Legislature in 1976 to regulate coastal development through the Coastal Act.

**With all due respect to Senator Blakespear, we must regretfully oppose SB 1077.**

If enacted, it will add to a cumulative degradation of the coastal environment for the benefit of those who live in the coastal zone and can afford to build these units. Furthermore, measures such as SB 1077 tend to encourage more legislation to seek Coastal Act exemptions, resulting in the further decay of one of California's foundational environmental protection laws. The protections the Coastal Act has provided since its enactment would be clearly compromised if ADUs and JDUs are exempted, and the data on ADUs and JDUS' impact on the housing shortage remains unsubstantiated. Furthermore, there is no requirement in SB 1077 that these dwellings be used as living quarters rather than a yoga or art workshop, or some other purpose. Our public coastline should not be degraded for this purpose — we also maintain that housing opportunity and a free and public coastline in California are not mutually exclusive.

For these reasons, we ask that you exert your leadership as committee chair and reject SB 1077.

Sincerely,

Laura Walsh  
California Policy Manager  
Surfrider Foundation

Andria Ventura  
Legislative and Policy Director  
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Ashley Eagle-Gibbs, Esq.  
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Garry Brown, Founder & President  
Orange County Coastkeeper  
Inland Empire Waterkeeper

Cc Senator Blakespear  
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee member