



Legislative Briefer: AB 1740 (Zbur)

March 2026

- **AB 1740 (Zbur) would eviscerate the public’s right to access the beach.** Fifty years ago, California’s voters recognized the critical need to keep California’s iconic coastline open for all Californians regardless of economic status. California’s constitution guarantees **maximum public access** to the California Coast, a right that the Coastal Commission is legally required to enforce. AB 1740 removes the Commission’s ability to enforce those protections by including the following exemptions:
 - **“Parking for ME, but not for YOU”:** The bill would allow for the creation of preferential parking programs for residents in coastal neighborhoods, effectively privatizing the public right-of-way and preventing access for visitors that have to drive themselves and their families to get to the beach.
 - **Allows removal of existing public parking along the State’s major iconic coastal thoroughfare:** The bill would allow for **immediate, statewide removal** of thousands of public parking spaces along Pacific Coast Highway (PCH/Hwy1) with no mandatory replacement, representing a significant loss of coastal access utilized by thousands if not millions of visitors annually. In many areas, such as Malibu and Sonoma, this is the only available parking for visitors from inland areas.
 - **Allows cities to approve unlimited parking fee increases:** The bill would allow uncapped increases in the cost of parking in coastal parking areas, including punitive and exclusionary “surge” parking rates with no cap and no avenue for the public to appeal.
- **AB 1740 exempts a wide array of coastal development projects from compliance with the Coastal Act:** Luxury condo (multi-unit) complexes, transportation infrastructure, and building expansions up to 150% of the structure’s original footprint would be exempt from compliance with the Coastal Act’s protections for the environment, public access, environmental justice and public safety in the face of sea level rise. As a result, this bill, if enacted as written, would accomplish the largest single rollback of Coastal Act environmental protections in the Act’s 50-year history.
- **AB 1740 guts the existing Coastal Development Permitting process in favor of developers, wealthy coastal cities, and other deep-pocketed special interests:** The existing Coastal Development Permit (CDP) application process incorporates analysis of sea level rise, environmental justice, and public coastal access considerations into development proposals in the coastal zone. By exempting most development from needing a CDP, AB 1740 would sacrifice these critical policy priorities and the public’s ability to participate in the process to protect these important public values.
- **AB 1740 entitles coastal cities to apply for these broad exemptions if they have a bike lane, some GHG policies, and a high frequency bus route:** The proposed process for coastal cities to become eligible for the raft of exemptions in this bill is an application to the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LUCI) for designation as a so-called “urban multimodal community,” a new, self-fulfilling designation created by the bill. Unfortunately, the criteria for this designation - having a bike lane and an

existing or planned bus route with a single stop in the coastal zone - have little bearing on coastal access for members of the public visiting from outside the community, or for environmental protection. A bike lane and a possible bus stop are not fully comparable replacements for also providing sufficient and low-cost parking next to the beach, protections against sea level rise, and the assurance of public access as part of projects. Furthermore, the proposed process has negligible safeguards—communities would automatically be approved for the designation and therefore the Coastal Act exemptions if LUCI doesn't affirmatively reject their application within 30 days.

- **AB 1740 would undermine affordable housing in the coastal zone¹.** Legislation passed in 2025 (SB 484, Laird) established a program to responsibly address the severe lack of affordable housing in many coastal cities such as Santa Monica. AB 1470 would undermine this legislation by instead accelerating luxury housing development in these cities, with reduced safeguards for the environment and public access.
- **AB 1740 is the wrong solution: If coastal cities want to control permitting within their boundaries, they should complete their Local Coastal Program and take over permitting from the Coastal Commission:** Since passage in 1976, the Coastal Act has provided for cities to adopt Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) which, once certified by the Coastal Commission, authorize local governments to issue their own CDPs and provide streamlined permitting pathways for many of the kinds of development favored by the bill, such as bike lanes, housing, and outdoor dining. California has 76 local governments within the coastal zone (61 cities and 15 counties). Of those, only 12—all cities—have not yet completed an LCP.
- **AB 1740 rewards the City of Santa Monica – who has had decades – and state funding provided to it – to get a pass from completing their Local Coastal Program.** As indicated above, AB 1740's primary sponsor, the City of Santa Monica, is one of only 12 cities in the coastal zone that has not yet developed a certified Local Coastal Program, meaning that the Coastal Commission must assume the workload of reviewing all development applications itself. Worse, since 2014, Santa Monica applied for and was given three separate grants totaling \$375,000 from the Coastal Commission expressly to help the city complete its LCP and thereby assume authority over local CDP applications. While other cities did the work to control their permitting, the City of Santa Monica appears to want the Legislature to excuse – and reward – the city for not doing what 64 local governments have done.

¹ No CDP required for:

(5) Any aspect of a housing development project, as defined in [Section 65589.5](#) of the Government Code, allowable under state and local law, including any permits, approvals, or public improvements required for the housing development project, if the housing development project meets all of the following conditions:

(A) The project site is located within an area designated for multiunit housing in the local government's general plan land use element, specific plan, or zoning ordinance.

(B) The project is not located in the following areas:

(i) Between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea or within 300 feet of the inland extent of any beach or of the mean high tideline of the sea where there is no beach, whichever is the greater distance.

(ii) On, or within a 100-foot radius of, a wetland.

(iii) On, or within, an environmentally sensitive habitat area.