

**AB 2480 – Student Housing Super Density Bonus****BILL SUMMARY**

**AB 2480** would allow for affordable student housing developments to qualify for our state’s “super density bonus” law.

**BACKGROUND**

Students across the state are having a hard time finding affordable housing. "[According to a 2024 report from the Legislative Analyst's Office](#), 24% of California community college students, 11% of CSU students, and 8% of UC students report experiencing homelessness during each academic year."

In addressing our state’s housing crisis, Density Bonus Law (DBL - found in California Government Code Sections 65915 – 65918) provides developers with powerful tools to encourage the development of affordable, senior, and student housing. In short, DBL allows a property developer to increase the density (the number of units) on a property above maximum allowed by local zoning as long as it reserves a minimum percentage of those units for low-income tenants.

The law provides a sliding scale of density bonuses, allowing developers to increase the number of units by up to 35% above local zoning limits, depending on the percentage of units set aside for target groups. For example, a project that allocates 15% of its units for very low-income households can qualify for a 32.5% density bonus.

In addition, developers who provide a specified amount of low-income units may increase their density (known as the super density bonus) by 50% by also providing units affordable to moderate-income households.

Recent legislation has allowed for student housing affordable to low-income students to receive the

basic density bonus. However, the super density bonus does not apply to student housing.

**SOLUTION**

**AB 2480** would harmonize the Student Housing Density Bonus with super density bonus, allowing additional density increases for developments that serve both low-income and moderate-income students. This would allow student developments that have maxed out their low-income density bonus to receive a super density bonus as long as the developer reserves those additional units for moderate income students.

The bill further defines “Moderate-income student” to mean a student who meets either of the following criteria:

- 1) The student is an independent student, as defined in 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1087vv, whose individual income does not exceed the moderate-income limit for a one-person household.
- 2) The student is claimed as a dependent for state or federal tax purposes and is a member of a household with a gross household income between 80% and 120% of area median income.

Provided that the resulting student housing project would not restrict more than 50% of the total units to moderate-income or lower income students, a local jurisdiction shall grant a super density bonus as long as:

- 1) The student housing development provides 24% of the total units to lower income students

- 2) The developer includes additional rental units affordable to lower income or moderate-income students.

**SUPPORT**

Student Homes Coalition (Sponsor)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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