



June 16, 2026

The Honorable Thomas Umberg
Chair, Senate Judiciary
1021 O Street, Suite 3240
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Support for AB 1903 – Construction defects

Dear Senator Umberg,

On behalf of the American Institute of Architects California (AIA California), representing over 11,000 architects and design professionals statewide, I am writing in strong support of AB 1903 (Wicks).

AB 1903 takes an important step toward restoring balance in California’s construction defect framework by prioritizing timely repair, improving transparency in claims, and ensuring that disputes are grounded in demonstrable damage. For architects and other design professionals, the current system too often results in prolonged and costly litigation, even in cases where issues could be more efficiently resolved through repair.

The need for reform is clear. According to a report by the Turner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley, from 2012 to 2022, California produced nearly 1 million multifamily units, yet only 3 percent—just 27,836 units—were for sale. The report identifies construction defect liability as a major factor constraining condominium development, limiting opportunities for homeownership across the state. Further, a recent Turner Center analysis suggests that the number of new condominium units in both the Bay Area and Southern California has declined by approximately 90 percent from peak production levels in 2005–2006. Condominiums were once foundational to workforce and “missing middle” housing, and their decline has had a significant impact on these critical market segments.

From a professional perspective, these challenges are widely experienced across the field. Architects across California consistently report that on condominium projects, insurance requirements can reach tens of millions of dollars relative to total construction costs, with an expectation that litigation is highly likely regardless of project quality. This level of risk is unsustainable and continues to discourage architects, developers, and builders from pursuing these projects.

AB 1903 addresses these issues by strengthening the right-to-repair process and requiring its completion prior to litigation, ensuring that project teams have a meaningful opportunity to resolve issues efficiently. The bill also improves notice requirements so that claims clearly identify the location and evidence of alleged defects, enabling more effective evaluation and response.

Importantly, the bill restores the principle that claims must involve actual, nonspeculative damage, helping to reduce costly and disruptive investigations driven by theoretical deficiencies rather than real-world impacts. It also encourages higher construction quality and more efficient resolution by allowing developers to utilize third-party enhanced quality control inspections during construction. For projects that receive third-party certification and where repairs are completed, the bill enables builders to obtain a release from further claims—introducing much-needed certainty into the process.

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Importantly, the framework proposed in AB 1903 is not theoretical. It draws on lessons learned from similar systems that have been successfully implemented in jurisdictions such as Canada and the state of New Jersey. These proven approaches demonstrate that a more balanced, repair-focused system can both protect homeowners and support housing production.

By reducing unnecessary litigation risk and encouraging efficient resolution of disputes, AB 1903 will help create a more stable and predictable environment for architects and the broader construction industry, while also supporting the production of much-needed for-sale housing in California.

For these reasons, AIA California respectfully urges your support for AB 1903.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Scott Terrell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" and last name "Terrell" clearly distinguishable.

Scott Terrell
Director of Government Relations