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## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



# SOLANO COUNTY

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April 4, 2025

The Honorable Matt Haney  
Chairman, Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee  
1021 O St., Ste. 5740  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **RE: OPPOSE – AB 518 (Ward) Low-Impact Camping Areas**

Dear Chairman Haney,

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I write in respectful yet adamant opposition to AB 518 regarding new residential camping laws. This unneeded measure, if adopted locally, could cause disruption in communities throughout California. Solano County does not have the resources or capability to fully prevent or control those enforcement issues and neighbor disputes that will undoubtedly occur should this bill be enacted.

Current law defines a "Special occupancy park" to mean a recreational vehicle park, temporary recreational vehicle park, incidental camping area, or tent camp. Health and Safety Code 18863 states that "(T)he Legislature finds and declares that increasing numbers of Californians own and use recreational vehicles for recreation, vacations, and temporary housing. Because these vehicles are highly mobile and use various facilities throughout the state, there is a need for consistent and uniform statewide regulations for special occupancy parks to assure their health, safety, and general welfare, and a decent living environment.

AB 518 permits individual homeowners to rent out their driveways, backyards, and other properties to campers without requiring the property owner to secure a State-issued campground permit, which is in direct conflict with the findings in HSC 18863 and would lead to disparate and inconsistent regulations. This measure will allow the property to have up to 9 separate camp sites at which individual campers can stay for up to two weeks at a time per camper, for a total of 28 days in a calendar year, year-round. This means that homeowners could have year-round encampments in their driveways. There is no requirement that the camping facilities be screened from neighboring properties. Local agencies will be hamstrung by property owners who are unmoved by the negative impacts on their own neighbors, and the noise and garbage issues that will undoubtedly occur, no matter how strenuous the county's requirements will be on property owners who attempt to use this new law.

Solano County also has concerns with AB 518 because the bill does not include exclusions or limitations on where this authorization should be prohibited. While urbanized cities are exempted from this bill, this will affect suburban and rural areas with a minimum 2-acre parcel, where neighbors can still see each other's homes, driveways, and yards. Again, there is no requirement in the measure that the property owner or manager be present on site; there is no prohibition on allowing camping in high fire severity zones.

This measure does not give local governments any tools to compel platforms to remove illegally operating campgrounds. Given the proliferation of online platforms assisting property owners in turning their homes into hotels and their yards into unpermitted and unregulated campgrounds, while facilitating

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the evasion of local taxation laws and land use controls, the Legislature first needs to seriously address the gaps in current law that govern the online platforms that facilitate these arrangements. While the bill purports to only authorize low -impact camping in suburban and rural areas where local governments “opt in” to this activity, as of this writing, there are parcels for rent on the sponsor’s website right now, offering RV camping inside city limits in jurisdictions that do not allow it. More specifically, Solano County has a “no camping ordinance” but the opt-in nature of the bill, coupled with the websites not disclosing addresses, could easily be worked around.

This only reiterates the County’s concerns with respect to camping in high fire severity zones and threatens the quality of life for suburban and rural neighborhoods which will be further compromised by inviting visitors unfamiliar with local fire risk, to set up camp in neighborhoods where the property owner many not even be home or on the property. This leaves negatively affected neighbors to suffer the consequences of campers who are unaware or unwilling to comply with the requirements of this measure, which could lead to violent confrontations or, very likely, endless new calls for public safety dispatch.

For these reasons, Solano County must oppose AB 518 and urges your “no” vote on this measure.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mitch N. Mashburn".

Mitch Mashburn, Chair  
Solano County Board of Supervisors

**CC:**

Members of the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee  
The Honorable Christopher M. Ward, California State Assemblymember  
The Honorable Christopher Cabaldon, California State Senator  
The Honorable Lori Wilson, California State Assemblymember  
The Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors  
Paragon Government Relations  
Karen Lange, SYASL Partners, Inc.