



**COUNTY OF
SAN BERNARDINO**

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GREGORY C. DEVEREAUX
Chief Executive Officer

May 18, 2012

The Honorable Darrel Steinberg
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **SB 1186** (Steinberg) – As Amended May 16, 2012- **SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Steinberg:

The County of San Bernardino is pleased to support Senate Bill 1186. This legislation would allow property owners a remediation period to comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and California’s special access laws before a lawsuit can be filed relating to access for Californians’ special needs. As you know, special access laws are susceptible to abuse through vexatious litigation pursued with the primary intent of financial gain, without concern for rectifying a wrong or creating a public benefit.

Within the past six years, over \$1.6 million in special access claims have been filed against the County of San Bernardino. Under existing law, a provision to rectify a situation prior to litigation is unavailable. If the opportunity to correct the accessibility issue had been available, the County would have made the correction, providing access to all and saving County taxpayers millions of dollars in unnecessary litigation.

Businesses throughout the Inland Empire are also impacted by these lawsuits, including 14 in the City of Redlands that have received threatening letters from attorneys claiming that a person’s ADA rights have been violated, even though the business owner wasn’t aware of any ADA issues. This legislation provides further protections for disabled individuals, by enacting strict timeframes for accessibility compliance and the creation of educational programs related to special access laws.

For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino supports Senate Bill 1186. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Josh Candelaria, Deputy Legislative Director, at (909) 387-4280. The County of San Bernardino thanks you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

JOSIE GONZALES, Chair
Board of Supervisors

The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.