

# **Housing Is A Human Right - April 2023**

## **Findings Report: Liam Dillon's News Coverage**

### **Introduction:**

This critique of *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon's housing coverage has been carried out by using the point of view of a housing justice activist. The mainstream media's reporting on housing justice issues is very important: it can help shape a political narrative activists must navigate or overcome; it can help stop or pass housing justice policies, such as rent control; it can help push forward the political and financial agendas of the real estate industry and its allies; and it can help shape public opinion that activists must navigate or overcome.

Overcoming inaccurate or biased media coverage is especially difficult for housing justice activists, who are already battling the multi-trillion-dollar, multi-national real estate industry. It's a David-and-Goliath struggle if there ever was one.

Just as important, inaccurate or biased or incomplete news coverage fails to properly educate readers, preventing them from making informed decisions as voters and politically engaged residents.

A journalist must make numerous decisions when working on a story. They include who to interview, who not to interview, what information to present in the article, what information to keep out of the article, what titles and descriptions to give people and groups, what's the angle of a story, and many other decisions. Always,

what a journalist doesn't include in an article is just as important as what he or she does include. For example, if a reporter decides to interview a real estate insider and not talk with a housing justice activist, then that article will only present the real estate industry's point of view. It also indicates that the journalist believes the housing justice movement's work and point of view aren't important.

To that point, it's telling that *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon's news coverage routinely dismisses or downplays the housing justice movement's work and point of view; he routinely handles AIDS Healthcare Foundation, the parent organization of Housing Is A Human Right, differently compared to the real estate industry, carrying out biased coverage against AHF; he routinely fails to provide important background information about AIDS Healthcare Foundation; he routinely fails to report the real estate industry's major role in fueling the housing affordability crisis; and he routinely fails to report about the massive revenues that are at stake for the real estate industry if a bill or ballot measure passes. But Dillon routinely pushes the real estate industry's lucrative "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda.

For this report, Housing Is A Human Right focused on Dillon's coverage of major state legislation known as SB 827 and SB 50 – AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Housing Is A Human Right played a leading role in opposing both bills. We also examine Dillon's coverage of two statewide rent control ballot measures called Proposition 10 and Proposition 21, which were largely organized and funded by AIDS Healthcare Foundation, but included the support from a broad coalition of hundreds of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders.

However, this is not a complete survey of Dillon's work on those issues. Housing Is A Human Right attempted to find all of his *L.A. Times* articles on those bills and propositions, but in one instance a link didn't work – Dillon wrote a number of stories for the *L.A. Times*' "California politics news feed," which is a kind of news blog and where that link didn't work. Since we couldn't find that story, it's possible that others were missed, but it wasn't for a lack of trying. We also didn't analyze Dillon's brief articles that promoted his housing podcast and stories that he co-wrote with another *L.A. Times* reporter. In total, we examined 33 articles that Dillon wrote for the *L.A. Times*.

After spending weeks on this project, we believe, without any doubt, that we found valid, overall patterns of his work on SB 827, Proposition 10, SB 50, and Proposition 21 that are very troubling.

Our key findings include:

- Dillon's coverage routinely dismissed or downplayed the housing justice movement's work, concerns, and perspective on various housing issues;
- He routinely handled AIDS Healthcare Foundation differently, and often unfairly, compared to the real estate industry, showing a bias against AHF;
- He routinely failed to give readers and voters important background information about AHF, misleading the public and harming people's ability to make informed decisions about issues that involved AHF;
- He routinely failed to report the real estate industry's role in fueling the housing affordability crisis;
- He routinely failed to report about the billions in revenue that were at stake for the real estate industry if a bill or ballot measure passed;

- He routinely failed to report the real estate industry's profit motive to oppose or support a bill or ballot measure;
- He routinely promoted the real estate industry's lucrative, self-serving "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda as the key solution for the housing affordability crisis – an agenda that was also used as a political hammer against the housing justice movement to stop tenant protections, such as rent control.
- And Dillon should not have been covering various issues because of his constant participation as a moderator, speaker, or panelist at real estate industry events, which had compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter.

Counting a previous report about [Dillon's participation in at least 20 real estate industry or real estate industry-related events](#), we have collected a mountain of evidence totaling 140 pages that show the *L.A. Times* reporter is something of a darling of the real estate industry, that his actions raise numerous conflict of interest issues, and that he promotes a "build, build, build" agenda that matches up perfectly with Big Real Estate's political and financial agendas.

## SB 827

### Introduction

On January 3, 2018, California State Sen. Scott Wiener introduces a [controversial land-use deregulation bill known as SB 827](#). California YIMBY, a statewide, land-use lobbying organization that was founded and funded by Big Tech executives, is a sponsor of the legislation and helped draft it. Both [Wiener and California YIMBY aggressively push the real estate industry's "build, build, build"](#) or "trickle-down housing" agenda. SB 827 attempts to carry that out by deregulating local zoning rules.

The real estate industry – developers, lobbying groups, landlords, and others – say that by flooding the rental housing market with new apartments, rent prices will drop for the poor and middle and working class. The real estate industry routinely offers the "build, build, build" or ["trickle-down housing"](#) agenda as an alternative to tenant protections such as rent control. In fact, real estate insiders conveniently use the "build, build, build" agenda as a political hammer to stop tenant protections, saying that any policy that harms housing production should not be passed.

But housing justice activists say that the "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda does not guarantee that rent prices will drop; that developers build almost exclusively luxury housing; that the people who are getting hit hardest by the housing affordability crisis – the poor and middle- and working-class residents – need affordable housing, not luxury; that an influx of luxury housing in

moderate- and lower-income neighborhoods will fuel gentrification and the displacement of longtime residents; and that “build, build, build” legislation will enrich the real estate industry, but harm the poor and middle and working class. Instead, activists want housing policies that create more affordable housing – first and foremost.

In fact, many activists counter the “build, build, build” agenda with the [“3 Ps”](#): protect tenants through rent control and other protections; preserve existing affordable housing, not demolish it to make way for luxury housing; and produce more affordable and homeless housing.

As the SB 827 battle unfolds, the [housing justice movement will largely oppose SB 827](#). AIDS Healthcare Foundation and its housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right, will also fight hard to stop the bill.

## Liam Dillon's News Coverage of SB 827

**January 4, 2018:** The day after California State Sen. Scott Wiener introduces SB 827, *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Get ready for a lot more housing near the Expo Line and other California transit stations if new legislation passes.”](#)

Dillon writes that SB 827 will create a “dramatic increase in new housing near transit stations...across California.” The first person that Dillon quotes is Wiener, noting that the state senator said more housing needs to be built to address the housing affordability crisis. Wiener, who received [nearly 700 contributions from real estate insiders](#) for his 2016 state senate campaign, is pushing the “build, build, build” or “trickle-down housing” agenda of the real estate industry through SB 827.

Dillon then quotes [Mark Vallianatos](#), director of a think tank called LAplus. Villianantos is also a co-founder of Abundant Housing LA, a [YIMBY organization with ties to California YIMBY](#). California YIMBY is a sponsor of SB 827. Dillon doesn't cite Vallianantos' Abundant Housing/YIMBY connection in the article and essentially presents him as an independent expert. Vallianantos' remarks come off as if he supports SB 827.

After Villianantos, Dillon quotes Los Angeles City Councilman Paul Koretz, who opposes the bill.

Dillon wraps up the article by reporting that California YIMBY is a “principal supporter” of SB 827.

Dillon does not quote anyone from the housing justice movement. There is no mention of gentrification and displacement. There is no mention of the serious need to build affordable housing. There is no mention that the real estate industry will haul in massive revenues if SB 827 passes. There is no mention of the real estate industry’s profit motive to have the bill passed.

**Summary:** Dillon quotes two politicians (Scott Wiener and Paul Kortez) and a think tank director (Vallianatos) who has connections to the YIMBY movement. He doesn’t quote a housing justice activist. As a result, Dillon presents a one-dimensional story about SB 827 that only provides analysis from two political leaders and a person connected to the YIMBY movement, which supports SB 827. The housing justice movement’s analysis of SB 827 is non-existent, and, as a result, the housing justice movement has been dismissed by Dillon. He also fails to report the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 827 is passed. And Dillon doesn’t cite the real estate industry’s obvious profit motive to have the bill approved. Lastly, the article essentially assumes that building more homes is the best way to address the housing affordability crisis – a position taken up by the real estate industry, YIMBYs, and politicians like State Sen. Scott Wiener. No other alternative, such as the “3 Ps” of protecting tenants, preserving existing affordable housing, and producing new affordable housing, is offered. There is no mention of gentrification and displacement.

**February 12, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Los Angeles tenant groups oppose bill that could lead to a development boom near transit.”](#)

Dillon writes that “a coalition of 37 low-income and tenant groups in Los Angeles is opposing state legislation that would dramatically increase new housing around transit.” Immediately after that, Dillon reports that Wiener “argues that the bill is needed to address both the state’s housing shortage and environmental goals” – by building more housing near public transportation.

What’s interesting about this article is that it’s very short: only six paragraphs. Dillon’s article on January 4, 2018, is more than double in length: 15 paragraphs. And that article cited a study by the McKinsey Global Institute, making the case that more homes needed to be built; quoted Wiener and his arguments; quoted a think tank director who’s connected to the YIMBY movement; and quoted an L.A. politician who opposed SB 827. This article doesn’t nearly go into as much detail.

Dillon cites activists’ concerns about displacement and quotes a one-sentence passage of a letter from housing justice groups to Wiener, explaining their opposition. That’s it. There’s no actual quote from a housing justice activist. There’s no reporting by Dillon about how SB 827 could fuel gentrification and displacement. There are no further passages from the letter in the article, [even though it’s filled with details](#). Dillon, in other words, provides very superficial coverage of the housing justice movement’s opposition to SB 827.

In fact, out of six paragraphs, only three report about the housing justice movement’s opposition. After that, one paragraph is dedicated to Wiener’s position

on SB 827. Another paragraph cites groups that support the bill, including “more than 120 top technology executives.” The final paragraph in the article notes that the Sierra Club California opposes that bill as does a Beverly Hills councilman. Dillon ends the article with a tweet from that councilman – an odd choice in an article about the housing justice movement’s opposition to SB 827.

Once again, Dillon mentions nothing about the nearly 700 contributions from the real estate industry to State Sen. Scott Wiener’s 2016 campaign. He also writes nothing about the major financial windfall for the real estate industry if SB 827 is passed, and he fails to report the [real estate industry’s role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#).

**Summary:** Dillon writes only a six-paragraph article about the housing justice movement’s opposition to SB 827 – compared to 15 paragraphs for Dillon’s article that announces the introduction of the bill. The reporter also doesn’t interview an activist for a more detailed analysis about the housing justice movement’s opposition to SB 827, and only half of the article is about the movement’s opposition with only one passage from the activists’ letter. Added together, Dillon shortchanges the housing justice movement and its concerns. And rather than end the article with information from a housing justice activist, Dillon oddly quotes a Beverly Hills councilman’s tweet. It’s as if Dillon is trying to frame the SB 827 debate in some way, and not in favor of the housing justice movement. The reporter also fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 827 is passed. Dillon doesn’t cite the real estate industry’s obvious profit motive to have the bill approved, and fails to report the [real estate industry’s role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#).

**February 28, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Garcetti says major state housing bill doesn’t protect single-family neighborhoods.”](#)

Dillon writes that Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti is not on board with the effort to pass SB 827. Dillon reports that Garcetti believes the bill doesn’t properly address concerns about housing affordability and that SB 827, according to Garcetti’s spokesperson, is “too blunt for our single-family home areas.”

Dillon quotes an excerpt from an article that State Sen. Scott Wiener wrote on his Medium page about changes to SB 827, and then the reporter provides a number of details about those changes. Dillon also writes that Wiener “casts the bill as a way to address the state’s housing shortage and the need to increase development near transit to fight climate change.” Dillon mentions that housing justice groups are concerned about displacement and gentrification.

In addition, Dillon quotes Climate Plan executive director Chanell Fletcher, who calls Wiener’s bill “gutsy,” but says more affordable housing needs to be included in SB 827. Fletcher also says there’s a need for more density and more homes near public transportation, which matches up with Wiener’s political argument for SB 827. And Dillon quotes Coalition for Economic Survival executive director Larry Gross, a longtime housing justice activist. Dillon essentially ends the article with Gross saying, “What protections do [tenants] have against exorbitant rent increases? None of that is in here.” Dillon, as a result, gives Gross the final word.

**Summary:** This article is one of the more balanced pieces Dillon has so far written about SB 827 – although it does have flaws. He quotes two opponents of SB 827 (Garcetti’s spokesperson and housing justice activist Larry Gross), a supporter (Wiener), and an activist who’s kind of sitting on the fence (Fletcher). Dillon also provides more details about the housing justice movement’s opposition to the bill. But the article is longer compared to the short piece about L.A. tenants groups opposing SB 827: 14 paragraphs compared to six paragraphs. Dillon also doesn’t mention Wiener’s deep financial ties to the real estate industry via campaign contributions, and the reporter fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 827 is passed. Dillon doesn’t cite the real estate industry’s obvious profit motive to have the bill approved, and fails to report the [real estate industry’s role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#).

**March 6, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Villaraigosa and Newsom want to build more houses in California than ever before. Experts see the candidates’ goal as an empty promise.”](#)

This article doesn’t go into SB 827, but the timing and larger themes of it are telling in various ways. Dillon writes that California gubernatorial candidates Antonio Villaraigosa and Gavin Newsom want to build millions of new homes to address the housing affordability crisis. Given that SB 827 is going through the legislative process at the time of this article, Dillon’s piece validates the “build, build, build” arguments made by Wiener and the real estate industry.

Dillon also states in the article that “local control over development decisions” is one of the three “most substantial barriers to large-scale housing production.” It’s the same position taken by supporters of SB 827.

Dillon doesn’t mention a need for tenant protections and to preserve existing affordable housing to address the housing affordability crisis. There’s a brief mention about producing more affordable housing – Dillon cites Villaraigosa and Newsom’s proposals to build low-income housing.

Instead, Dillon writes about how a housing shortage has fueled the housing affordability crisis. “For decades,” he writes, “not enough homes have been built in California to accommodate a growing population, leading to a spike in housing costs.” There’s no mention of the rise of corporate landlords and predatory business practices by the real estate industry as reasons for the housing affordability crisis.

The article is clearly written from the point of view of the real estate industry, YIMBYs, and politicians like State Sen. Scott Wiener, all of whom push “build, build, build” or “trickle-down housing.” That agenda prioritizes the mass construction of luxury housing.

And Dillon doesn’t quote a housing justice activist in this article. Instead, he quotes a consultant, Christopher Thornberg, who’s known for pushing the “build, build, build” agenda; Newsom; Villaraigosa; UCLA urban planning professor Michael Lens, who’s also known to push “build, build, build;” and the Associated General Contractors of California CEO Peter Tateishi, who obviously wants to

build as many homes as possible. The housing justice movement has been dismissed.

Even though the article doesn't bring up SB 827, it's an excellent example of how Dillon fully embraces the real estate industry's "build, build, build" agenda. The story also shows why the real estate industry became very comfortable with Dillon and repeatedly invited the reporter to participate in their summits, conferences, and forums – between 2016 and 2023, Dillon participated in at least 20 real estate industry or real estate industry-related events.

*[\(Read our report about Dillon's participation in real estate industry events.\)](#)*

**March 25, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporters Liam Dillon, David Zahniser, and Jon Schleuss write an article titled [“Plan to dramatically increase development would transform some L.A. neighborhoods.”](#) It explains how SB 827 may impact Los Angeles. Since this article was co-written by Dillon, Zahniser, and Schleus, we can't analyze it. We don't know what Dillon wrote.

**April 10, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Major California housing bill narrowed before its first legislative debate.”](#)

Dillon writes about the changes to SB 827 before it heads to a state senate transportation and housing committee. He only writes one sentence about the housing justice movement's concerns about gentrification and displacement. And he appears to try to soften the blow of that opposition by first noting that “17

experts in the history of housing segregation across the country endorsed the bill.” Dillon also cites by name real estate groups that support SB 827, an environmental group that opposes it, and another environmental group that backs the bill. But he doesn’t mention housing justice groups by name that oppose SB 827.

Dillon does not quote any housing justice activists, but he gives Wiener the final word by ending the article with a quote from a Medium piece that the state senator wrote. The reporter mentions nothing about Wiener’s nearly 700 campaign contributions from the real estate. The reporter also fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 827 is passed. Dillon doesn’t cite the real estate industry’s obvious profit motive to have the bill approved, and fails to report the [real estate industry’s role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#).

At this point, with SB 827 heading to a state senate committee, Dillon has not written one article that focuses purely on Wiener’s background, his political allies, his political enemies, his working relationships with San Francisco housing justice groups, and other important facts that the public should know about Wiener. After all, Dillon has deemed SB 827 a major housing bill in his coverage. That demands a probing profile of Wiener, a new state senator who’s trying to dramatically re-write land-use zoning rules that will impact millions of Californians. But Dillon has failed to do that. Why?

The *L.A. Times*, however, has done such probing profiles on AIDS Healthcare Foundation, Housing Is A Human Right’s parent organization. Why didn’t Wiener get the same treatment?

In addition, AHF and [Housing Is A Human Right](#) have been very involved in the [housing justice movement's effort to stop SB 827](#), but Dillon never mentions the HIV/AIDS nonprofit in his coverage. Which is an odd omission, especially during this period: Dillon has known for months that AHF is working on an effort to repeal statewide rent control restrictions in California through a ballot measure. It's as if Dillon doesn't want to give any credibility to AHF's housing justice work.

**Summary:** Dillon diminishes the concerns of the housing justice movement and essentially dismisses the housing justice movement, failing to quote an activist and not mentioning by name some of the housing justice groups that oppose SB 827. The reporter also doesn't mention Wiener's deep financial ties to the real estate industry via campaign contributions, and Dillon fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 827 is passed. Dillon doesn't cite the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill approved, and fails to report the [real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#). The reporter also gives Wiener the final word in the article, and Dillon hasn't written a probing profile on Wiener, a new state senator who's trying to dramatically alter land-use rules that will impact millions of Californians. Dillon oddly omits AHF and Housing Is A Human Right's involvement in stopping SB 827 in his news coverage of the bill.

**April 17, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["California lawmakers killed one of the biggest housing bills in the country."](#)

Dillon writes about how SB 827 failed to make it out of the state senate transportation and housing committee. Overall, he casts the bill as an effort to build

more homes in order to address the housing affordability crisis. In other words, the reporter is pushing the real estate industry's "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" political argument.

Dillon mentions nothing about corporate landlords and other predatory landlords charging excessive rents; how the "build, build, build" agenda is a luxury-housing push that fuels gentrification and skyrocketing rents; or how there's a dire need to first build more affordable housing, not luxury. After all, the poor and middle and working class are getting hit hardest by the housing affordability crisis, and they can't afford luxury housing.

Dillon does not quote any housing justice activists for the article. He writes only one sentence about the housing justice's concern about gentrification and displacement. But he writes several paragraphs that provide Wiener's perspective. He also quotes State Sen. Scott Wiener and two other state senators. Once again, Dillon gives Wiener the final word by ending the article with a quote from the state senator.

And although housing justice activists played a major role in killing SB 827, Dillon reports in this article that the bill was "felled in part by opponents who argue that it treated small cities and large ones like San Francisco the same way." Dillon, in other words, dismisses the housing justice movement's work. AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Housing Is A Human Right are not mentioned in the article, even though they played a leading role in stopping SB 827.

**Summary:** Dillon pushes the real estate industry's "build, build, build" political argument for addressing the housing affordability crisis. Dillon diminishes the

housing justice movement's concerns and essentially dismisses the movement by failing to provide a quote from an activist. The reporter also doesn't mention Wiener's deep financial ties to the real estate industry via campaign contributions, and Dillon fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 827 is passed. He fails to report the [real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#), and doesn't cite the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill approved. The reporter also hasn't written a probing profile on Wiener, a new state senator who's trying to dramatically alter land-use rules that will impact millions of Californians. The article is clearly written from the perspective of State Sen. Scott Wiener. AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Housing Is A Human Right are not mentioned in the article, even though they played a leading role in stopping SB 827.

**May 2, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled "[A major California housing bill failed after opposition from the low-income residents it aimed to help. Here's how it went wrong.](#)"

From the get-go, the article strikes an arrogant, condescending, dismissive tone with the headline, essentially stating that low-income residents killed a bill that they didn't know was good for them. Or put another way, the headline portrays low-income residents as stupid and dismisses their concerns about gentrification and displacement. From there, things don't get much better.

In his article, Dillon tries to lay out why SB 827 was stopped. He starts with an ugly scene outside San Francisco City Hall when YIMBY supporters aggressively

confronted housing justice activists over their opposition to SB 827. Many of those activists were people of color while the YIMBYs were mostly, if not entirely, white people in their twenties or thirties. The confrontation sparked an outrage within the housing justice movement. Then Dillon goes on to explain the friction between the YIMBY movement and the housing justice movement, and states that this “divide was one of the primary reasons for the failure” of SB 827.

What’s incredible about this article is that Dillon is now stating that the housing justice movement played a key role in the death of SB 827. Previously, in his coverage, he had largely diminished and dismissed the housing justice movement. It’s a jarring u-turn by Dillon, but he also understood, as the battle was unfolding, that the housing justice movement’s opposition could be lethal for SB 827. Was he trying to prevent that death by dismissing the housing justice movement?

Throughout his reporting on SB 827, Dillon would go into details about Wiener’s legislation and changes made to it. He also reported that Wiener was working with housing justice activists. But now he reports, after finally interviewing a number of advocates, that “activists for low-income residents and communities of color said that they were blindsided by State Sen. Scott Wiener’s proposal and that subsequent efforts by the senator to protect against potential displacement and gentrification were inadequate.” Those key facts were missing Dillon’s previous coverage. Again, why?

Dillon also goes into the role of California YIMBY, which helped write SB 827 and aggressively advocated for its passage. California YIMBY was founded and funded by Big Tech executives, who publicly supported Wiener’s bill. But Dillon only mentioned California YIMBY once during his months of covering SB 827.

Why? The YIMBY movement was clearly becoming a political liability for the effort to pass SB 827. Did Dillon try to keep YIMBYs out of the limelight to help SB 827?

So Dillon is now reporting that YIMBYs and housing justice activists were important players in the battle over SB 827. Something he had never written in his previous coverage. Dillon also quotes several housing justice activists – something that was lacking in most of his SB 827 coverage. Again, it’s a jarring about-face. But the reporter still doesn’t mention AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Housing Is A Human Right, who played a leading role in stopping SB 827.

Dillon doesn’t write things by accident. His SB 827 coverage always appeared to have some kind of agenda, usually in favor of Wiener. So this last article about SB 827 must have an agenda, too. But what is it?

After Dillon runs through a number of quotes from California YIMBY CEO Brian Hanlon and several housing justice activists – including Laura Raymond of the Alliance for Community Transit-Los Angeles and Anya Lawler of the Western Center on Law & Poverty and Shanti Singh of Tenants Together – the reporter once again gives Wiener the final word by ending with a quote from him. Responding to the critique that YIMBYs failed to build a broad coalition to pass SB 827, Wiener says, “If they’d been around for 20 years, it would be a fair criticism. They’re a brand-new movement.”

With that, Dillon’s possible agenda for this article becomes more apparent: he seems to have written an apology note on the behalf of the YIMBY movement. Or at the very least, he wrote a piece to help the public understand the YIMBY

movement. Dillon knows the YIMBYs need help, especially since California YIMBY and Wiener plan to move forward with more legislation.

**Summary:** This article is very good, but not in the way that Dillon intended. The piece shows that Dillon's previous coverage on SB 827 largely failed to report the housing justice movement's perspective and its role in stopping the bill. The headline is also telling: it actually reflects Dillon's arrogant and dismissive approach towards the housing justice movement during the SB 827 battle. That won't change in Dillon's coverage for Proposition 10, State Sen. Scott Wiener's SB 50, and Proposition 21. The reporter also doesn't mention Wiener's deep financial ties to the real estate industry via campaign contributions, and Dillon fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 827 is passed. Dillon doesn't cite the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill approved, and fails to report the real estate industry's role in fueling the [housing affordability crisis](#). The reporter also hasn't written a probing profile on Wiener, a new state senator who's trying to dramatically alter land-use rules that will impact millions of Californians. AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Housing Is A Human Right are not mentioned in the article, even though they played a leading role in stopping SB 827.

## Proposition 10

### Introduction:

In 2018, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, the parent organization of Housing Is A Human Right, helped create a [statewide coalition of more than 525 housing justice groups](#), social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders, including U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, to repeal California's Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act. The 1995 law created statewide rent control restrictions.

Ever since Costa-Hawkins' passage, the housing justice movement has been trying to repeal it. Twenty-three years later, AHF and its hundreds of allies aimed to end the law through a statewide ballot measure called Proposition 10 – the Yes on Prop 10 campaign was mostly funded by AHF. The real estate industry, led by the [California Apartment Association](#) and numerous corporate landlords, would aggressively fight back by delivering [more than \\$77 million in contributions to the No on Prop 10 campaign](#).

Prop 10 was considered [one of the most prominent rent control fights in the country](#). Activists in other states were watching the initiative closely, hoping a Prop 10 victory in California would give rise to a national rent control movement. The real estate industry, in return, feared the growth of such a movement, which would impact [their ability to make billions in revenue by charging unfair, excessive rents](#).

The financial and political stakes were high for everyone, but, in the end, the real estate industry successfully defeated Prop 10 through a massive, multi-million-dollar TV ad campaign that tricked and confused California voters.

The thrust of the real estate industry's argument against Prop 10 was that more housing needed to be built to address the housing affordability crisis, and rent control would harm housing production – a [USC study found that argument to be overblown](#). Like many times before, the real estate industry used the “build, build, build” or “trickle-down housing” agenda as a political hammer to stop the work of housing justice activists.

Perhaps tellingly, [California YIMBY, the statewide land-use lobbying organization founded and funded by Big Tech executives, refused to endorse Prop 10](#), essentially standing with the corporate landlords who were funding the No on Prop 10 campaign. [California YIMBY is a strong proponent of the “build, build, build” or “trickle-down housing” agenda](#). Proposition 10 may have also been in conflict with the beliefs of *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon, who constantly asserts in his articles that the “build, build, build” agenda is key for solving the housing affordability crisis.

## Liam Dillon's News Coverage of Proposition 10

**October 23, 2017:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Rent control in California could expand dramatically under a possible 2018 initiative.”](#)

Dillon reports that housing justice activists have filed a statewide ballot measure to repeal the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act in 2018. Dillon quotes two housing justice activists and notes that AIDS Healthcare Foundation is involved in the effort.

In the article, Dillon already tries to frame AHF a certain way, writing that the organization “has funded numerous state and local ballot measures, including an unsuccessful effort earlier this year to limit growth in the city of Los Angeles.” That effort was Measure S in 2017, which AHF organized and largely bankrolled. Other housing justice and community groups joined the Yes on Measure S campaign.

Dillon's analysis of AHF repeats the real estate industry's political talking points during the Measure S campaign: that the organization was trying to limit the growth of new development. But that wasn't why AHF moved forward with the initiative. AHF sought to end L.A. City Hall's controversial, even corrupt sweetheart deals made with developers, whose luxury developments in middle- and working-class neighborhoods were fueling [L.A.'s gentrification crisis](#). Measure S, in other words, was an anti-gentrification, anti-corruption effort. Dillon doesn't provide any of that nuance in his article.

In fact, Dillon provides a link in his story that goes to an [L.A. Times](#) article that notes, “Neighborhood activists had championed Measure S as a way to reform a broken planning process at City Hall, arguing that it would prevent out-of-scale projects that ramp up traffic and fuel gentrification.” So Dillon ignores his newspaper’s analysis of Measure S when writing this article. Why?

In addition, Dillon gives no background information about AHF’s longtime work as the world’s largest HIV/AIDS medical-care nonprofit. He mentions nothing about AHF providing life-saving HIV drug treatment in more than 40 countries around the world, serving mostly lower-income patients in places such as South Africa, Cambodia, India, and Mexico and saving millions of lives. Dillon will repeatedly omit these facts in his coverage of AHF.

**Summary:** Dillon writes a mostly straightforward article about the housing justice movement’s first steps to repeal Costa-Hawkins through a statewide ballot measure, and he quotes two housing justice activists. But from the very start of the Prop 10 campaign, Dillon provides slanted, inaccurate, and incomplete news coverage when writing about AIDS Healthcare Foundation, carrying out a bias against AHF.

**January 11, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Proposal to expand rent control in California fails to advance.”](#)

Dillon writes an article about the housing justice movement’s effort to repeal Costa-Hawkins through state legislation. That effort was stopped by the state assembly housing and community development committee.

Repeating his long-held “build, build, build” bias, Dillon writes that “rents and housing costs have soared in California, especially in recent years, as new home building has failed to keep pace with population growth.”

Dillon also makes sure to note that two members of the assembly housing and community development committee “were concerned that a large growth in rent control could slow already lagging housing production in the state.”

That will be a convenient, self-serving argument continually repeated by the real estate industry during the Prop 10 campaign, steering clear of the fact that corporate landlords and other landlords are worried that they’ll no longer be able to make massive profits by charging excessive rents if Costa-Hawkins is repealed.

Later in the article, Dillon hammers home the real estate industry’s self-serving argument, reporting that “opponents to the legislation, chiefly the California Apartment Assn., argued that rent control restrictions would stifle developers’ willingness to build new properties, exacerbating the state’s problems.” Dillon then quotes a senior vice president at the CAA. But he never mentions the obvious profit motive behind the real estate industry’s opposition to the repeal of Costa-Hawkins.

Dillon then mentions that housing justice activists are collecting signatures to repeal Costa-Hawkins through a ballot measure. He reports that AIDS Healthcare Foundation is “one of the groups behind the effort.” Dillon only describes AHF as a Los Angeles-based nonprofit. He mentions nothing about AHF’s longtime work to provide life-saving HIV drug treatment in more than 40 countries around the

world, serving mostly lower-income patients in places such as South Africa, Cambodia, India, and Mexico and saving millions of lives.

Yet Dillon does make a point of providing a link in his article that goes to an *L.A. Times* hit piece about AHF president Michael Weinstein titled “‘Thug,’ ‘Bully,’ ‘Satan’: This L.A. activist has never shied from controversy while building an AIDS political powerhouse.”

By the end of the article, Dillon quotes two states politicians, a senior vice president at the California Apartment Association, and one renter who supported the repeal of Costa-Hawkins. Dillon, in other words, overwhelmingly reports from the perspective of the political establishment.

**Summary:** Dillon’s coverage emphasizes the real estate industry’s “build, build, build” talking points, a self-serving, convenient political argument to stop rent control. He mentions nothing about the real estate industry’s profit motive to stop the repeal of Costa-Hawkins or the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry if the legislation is passed. And Dillon overwhelmingly reports from the perspective of the political establishment. He also provides slanted, incomplete news coverage when writing about AIDS Healthcare Foundation, carrying out a bias against AHF.

**June 15, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Californians will make a big decision on rent control in November.”](#)

Dillon explains and analyzes the upcoming Proposition 10 campaign, noting that the initiative recently qualified for the November 2018 ballot.

Dillon notes that the California Apartment Association will be one of the opponents of the measure, but he merely writes that the organization “represents landlords.” Dillon provides no information about the corporate landlords who contribute to the lobbying group, and he fails to report that the CAA is one of the most powerful political players in Sacramento, shaping housing and land-use policy and [contributing millions in campaign cash to local and state politicians](#) – the CAA is an official supporter of State Sen. Scott Wiener’s SB 827, and Wiener receives major contributions from the CAA. Dillon also fails to report that the [CAA aggressively opposes tenant protections throughout California](#).

These are significant omissions – Dillon, though, does provide a link in the article to the No on Prop 10’s Twitter page.

Those omissions are especially glaring since Dillon does provide a long paragraph of information about AHF’s previous ballot measure fights – and Dillon once again links to the *L.A. Times* hit piece on AHF president Michael Weinstein. The reporter also doesn’t mention anything about AHF’s longtime, life-saving work as the world’s largest HIV/AIDS medical-care nonprofit.

Dillon even displays an odd distrust of AHF by writing that the organization “argues its focus on housing benefits the low-income AIDS patients it serves.” The key word is “argues,” which signals to readers that Dillon is suspicious of AHF.

Dillon does quote AHF’s director of the ballot measure campaign. Other than that, the article is entirely filled with Dillon’s political analysis, which is mostly told from the perspective of the political establishment – yet again.

The *L.A. Times* reporter, for example, makes sure to repeat the real estate industry's argument against rent control and the repeal of Costa-Hawkins, writing that "economists, including liberal ones, contend that rent control leads to decreases in home building, and housing shortages are a key driver of California's affordability problem." Dillon is careful to use the phrase "including liberal ones" in a state where Democratic voters decide campaigns.

Dillon, though, mentions nothing about the commodification of housing with the rise of corporate landlords or the predatory business tactics of the real estate industry or the greed within the real estate industry that's wildly out of control or that developers build almost exclusively luxury housing, which doesn't address the serious lack of affordable housing and therefore contributes to the ongoing housing affordability crisis.

He also states as fact a key part of the real estate industry's argument by noting that "housing shortages are a key driver of California's affordability problem." But he mentions nothing about the real estate industry's profit motive to stop the repeal of Costa-Hawkins or the billions in revenue that are at stake if the ballot measure passes.

**Summary:** Dillon continues his slanted, incomplete coverage of AIDS Healthcare Foundation, carrying out a bias against AHF. He also again repeats the real estate industry's arguments against rent control and the repeal of Costa-Hawkins. And he provides no analysis about the real estate industry's role in fueling the housing affordability crisis. In addition, Dillon writes nothing about the real estate industry's profit motive to stop the repeal of Costa-Hawkins or the billions in

revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry if Prop 10 is passed. The reporter provides political analysis that's mostly told from the perspective of the political establishment.

**September 26, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["What a rent control fight in Silicon Valley could mean for the rest of California."](#)

Dillon writes about a rent control battle in Mountain View, California, noting that similar battles could happen in other parts of the state if Prop 10 is passed. Since Dillon has consistently shown a habit of repeating the real estate industry's "build, build, build" and anti-rent control arguments, one can rightly question his decision to write about a rent control battle in a Silicon Valley suburb – and how that may help the real estate industry's campaign against Prop 10. On the surface, the article *appears* balanced. But by now, Dillon's reporting can't be trusted.

That's especially true in late September of 2018.

A few weeks earlier, in mid-September, Dillon had participated in the National Multifamily Housing Council's Fall Meeting in Washington D.C. as a panelist. He didn't cover the event as a reporter — he participated in it, elbow to elbow, with real estate executives.

[\(Read our report about Dillon's participation in real estate industry events.\)](#)

NMHC is one of the most powerful landlord lobbying groups in the nation, and it's deeply involved with the No on Prop 10 campaign – one of its vice president's is a member of the No on Prop 10 executive committee and NHMC will contribute campaign cash to No on Prop 10. In addition, NMHC's sponsors include numerous corporate landlords, such as Equity Residential, Sares Regis Group, UDR, and billionaire George Marcus, that are shelling out major contributions to the No on Prop 10 campaign. It's a huge conflict of interest for Dillon to participate in the NMHC's fall meeting, which also happens to be a lobbying event and means Dillon is participating in that lobbying effort.

In fact, it's such a conflict of interest that Dillon should no longer be covering the Prop 10 campaign – his impartiality and integrity as a journalist have been obliterated. But Dillon's editors at the *L.A. Times* allow him to keep working on the ballot measure – they also apparently approved Dillon's wildly inappropriate participation in the NMHC's falling meeting.

So now Dillon is writing about a rent control battle in Mountain View, California, and he dutifully reports everything the real estate industry has been saying for months about rent control and Prop 10.

Dillon notes that the Proposition 10 campaign is happening at a time when “the state grapples with a housing shortage stretching back a generation.” He also quotes a tenant who said his landlord doesn't maintain his rent-controlled building – another argument the real estate industry makes against rent control. And Dillon states that landlords have decided to sell their rent-controlled buildings to developers, who then demolish the housing to build condominiums – yet another argument made by the real estate industry. The *L.A. Times* reporter also writes that

“another common argument against rent control is that it would depress new housing construction” – the real estate industry’s primary argument against rent control and the repeal of Costa-Hawkins.

Dillon also quotes a senior vice president at the California Apartment Association, which is leading the No on Prop 10 campaign – but doesn’t quote a housing justice activist that supports Yes on Prop 10, dismissing the housing justice movement. He also doesn’t quote anyone from the Yes on Prop 10 campaign.

In the end, what appears to be a balanced article isn’t balanced at all, especially when considering Dillon’s participation in the NMHC’s falling meeting only weeks earlier. And it begs the question of why did Dillon write about Mountain View? Why not write about a city such as Los Angeles where its outdated rent control policy, due to the restrictions put into place by Costa-Hawkins, was harming tenants in various ways? Why not talk with housing justice activists fighting on the front lines of the housing affordability and homelessness crises and devote an entire article about why they think Costa-Hawkins needs to be repealed? Why write an article that largely repeats the same political arguments made by the real estate industry?

**Summary:** Dillon once again repeats the real estate industry’s political arguments against rent control and the repeal of Costa-Hawkins, and he writes nothing about the industry’s profit motive to stop the repeal of Costa-Hawkins or its role in fueling the housing affordability crisis. He fails to report about the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry if Prop 10 passes. He also quotes an executive at the California Apartment Association, which is leading the No on Prop 10 campaign. But he doesn’t quote a housing justice activist that

supports Yes on Prop 10, dismissing the housing justice movement. He also doesn't quote anyone from the Yes on Prop 10 campaign. This article is highly suspect because Dillon had participated in a National Multifamily Housing Council lobbying event a few weeks earlier – and the NMHC and its sponsors are deeply involved in the No on Prop 10 campaign. At this point, Dillon's impartiality and integrity as a journalist has been compromised, and he should not be covering Proposition 10.

**October 3, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“It’s expensive to be a tenant in California. Will Proposition 10’s rent control expansion help?”](#)

A few weeks after speaking at the National Multifamily Housing Council's Fall Meeting in Washington D.C., Dillon writes a “rundown” about the issues surrounding Proposition 10. He notes that millions of California tenants are rent burdened, but only attributes that to “little housing production.” Dillon also quotes an anti-rent control economist and writes that the “primary solution to housing affordability problems is to build lots more homes and have the new supply force prices down.” Dillon then follows that economist with quotes from two researchers who helped write pro-rent control studies.

Dillon also explains what Proposition 10 does, and then he mentions an anti-rent control study by Stanford University researchers. The Yes on Prop 10 campaign released a [detailed analysis of that paper](#), finding it to be seriously flawed and misleading. Dillon briefly mentions that “rent control supporters believe the study unfairly blamed the system for fueling gentrification.”

The reporter ends the article stating that if Proposition 10 passes, “expect a lot of new local battles over rent control” – and he mentions the fight in Mountain View.

He writes nothing about the real estate industry’s role in the housing affordability crisis. He reports nothing about the real estate industry’s profit motive to stop Prop 10. He fails to report about the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry if Prop 10 passes.

**Summary:** Dillon blames the housing affordability crisis on a shortage of homes and mentions nothing about the real estate industry’s role in skyrocketing rents. And he repeats many of the same arguments that the No on Prop 10 campaign is rolling out. He also fails to mention the real estate industry’s profit motive for stopping Prop 10 or the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry if the ballot measure passes. Dillon had participated in a National Multifamily Housing Council lobbying event a few weeks earlier – and the NMHC and its sponsors are deeply involved in the No on Prop 10 campaign. At this point, Dillon’s impartiality and integrity as a journalist has been compromised, and he should not be covering Proposition 10. On October 2, 2018, the day before this article was published, the National Multifamily Housing Council contributed \$25,000 each to two No on Prop 10 committees.

**October 19, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Proposition 10, which would expand rent control, is ‘in deep trouble,’ poll shows.”](#)

Only weeks away from Election Day, Dillon writes a story about a USC Dornsife/*L.A. Times* poll on Prop 10. He writes that the “initiative that would expand rent control in California faces a steep deficit as election day nears.”

Dillon doesn't mention any of the No on Prop 10 contributors or major players by name. For example, he doesn't mention the California Apartment Association, which is running the No on Prop 10 campaign. Dillon also doesn't mention the California Association of Realtors, which is one of the main contributors to No on Prop 10. Interestingly, he participated in a California Apartment Association housing forum and a California Association of Realtors summit in 2016. Dillon also doesn't report the exact amount of campaign cash that individual real estate companies have delivered to No on Prop 10.

Yet Dillon does mention AIDS Healthcare Foundation by name, and provides the exact amount that AHF has contributed to the Yes on Prop 10 campaign – the reporter once again only describes AHF as a Los Angeles-based nonprofit, providing no information about its life-saving HIV/AIDS work around the world. In addition, [Dillon fails to report that a broad coalition of housing justice groups](#), social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders supports Prop 10, essentially dismissing the housing justice movement and the other groups. Added together, he gives readers the misleading impression that only AHF is trying to repeal Costa-Hawkins.

**Summary:** Dillon clearly handles AHF differently compared to the No on Prop 10 campaign and the real estate industry, showing a bias against AHF. He provides no specifics about exactly who is running No on Prop 10. He also doesn't name individual real estate companies that are contributing to No on Prop 10. And he doesn't cite the exact amounts those contributors have given. Yet he cites AHF by name and provides the exact amount that the organization has contributed to Yes on Prop 10. Dillon also fails to report that a broad coalition of advocacy groups, unions, and civic leaders support Prop 10, misleading readers into thinking that only AHF is trying to repeal Costa-Hawkins and essentially dismissing other housing justice activists and advocacy groups. He also provides no information about AHF's life-saving HIV/AIDS work around the world. Dillon had participated in a National Multifamily Housing Council lobbying event a few weeks earlier – and the NMHC and its sponsors are deeply involved in the No on Prop 10 campaign. At this point, Dillon's impartiality and integrity as a journalist has been compromised, and he should not be covering Proposition 10.

**October 31, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“How California has become a national battleground for rent control as money flows in from landlords.”](#)

For months, the Yes on Prop 10 campaign had been publishing articles and posting on social media about the corporate landlords contributing to the No on Prop 10 campaign. But specifics about the real estate industry's funding of No on Prop 10 has been largely unmentioned by the mainstream media, including the *L.A. Times*. Finally, only days until Election Day, Dillon gives some details about the No on

Prop 10 campaign's top contributors. He also goes into AHF's role within Yes on Prop 10.

Surprisingly, Dillon reports that real estate "companies have also said they're against Proposition 10 because expanded rent control would hurt their bottom lines." One wonders why Dillon hadn't earlier reported that profit motive to kill Prop 10. He also names Essex Property Trust, Blackstone Group, Invitation Homes, and Equity Residential as major contributors to No on Prop 10. Again, why wasn't this information given to the public earlier? Not days before voters head to the polls.

Dillon also reports that real estate executives at the National Multifamily Housing Council's fall meeting described Prop 10 as an "existential threat to the industry." But he doesn't disclose that he participated in that real estate lobbying event, misleading readers into thinking that he covered the fall meeting as a reporter. Dillon also doesn't report, by name, that the California Apartment Association, one of the most powerful and politically influential landlord lobbying groups in the state, is running the No on Prop 10 campaign.

As for AHF, Dillon notes that the nonprofit is the "single largest donor" to Yes on Prop 10. He mentions nothing about the [more than 525 housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that support Prop 10](#), essentially dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups. Dillon again inaccurately describes AHF's Measure S, the 2017 anti-gentrification, anti-corruption ballot measure in Los Angeles, as a "slow growth" initiative. And the reporter again provides a link to the *L.A. Times* hit piece about AHF president Michael Weinstein. All of which shows a bias against AHF.

To end the article, Dillon gives the final word to real estate analyst Michael Lewis, who says real estate companies are worried that Prop 10 would start another wave of rent control. “It would be like, for example, having a new communist government overseas,” says Lewis. “The U.S. just doesn’t want to see it.” And with that, Dillon gives readers the impression that Proposition 10 is some kind of communist tool. No wonder the real estate industry keeps inviting Dillon to their conferences.

**Summary:** Dillon does the right thing to finally write about specific real estate companies that are contributing to No on Prop 10. But he fails to mention that a broad coalition of advocacy groups, unions, and civic leaders support Prop 10, misleading readers into thinking that only AHF is trying to repeal Costa-Hawkins and essentially dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups. Dillon also takes potshots at AHF by inaccurately describing Measure S as a “slow growth” initiative and providing a link, once again, to an *L.A. Times* hit piece about AHF president Michael Weinstein. All of which shows a bias against AHF. Dillon also misleads readers by not disclosing that he participated in the National Multifamily Housing Council’s fall meeting. The NMHC and its sponsors are deeply involved in the No on Prop 10 campaign. At this point, Dillon’s impartiality and integrity as a journalist has been compromised, and he should not be covering Proposition 10.

**November 6, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Voters reject Proposition 10, halting effort to expand rent control across the state.”](#)

By this point, Dillon’s impartiality and integrity as a reporter has been compromised beyond recognition, especially after participating in the National Multifamily Housing Council’s fall meeting and not disclosing that to readers. Regardless, he reports that Prop 10 has been “decisively rejected by voters.” High up, in the third paragraph of the story, he quotes a statement from California Apartment Association CEO Tom Bannon, but fails to inform readers that the CAA ran the No on Prop 10 campaign.

As expected, Dillon repeats the talking points of the No on Prop 10 campaign, writing that “they argued that expanding rent control would increase the state’s housing shortage, exacerbate overall affordability issues, and hurt the investments of single-family homeowners.” And he again uses the “existential threat to the industry” quote from the National Multifamily Housing Council fall meeting – and Dillon again fails to disclose to readers that he participated in that real estate lobbying event.

Also as expected, Dillon fails to mention the [broad coalition of housing justice groups](#), social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that supported Prop 10, essentially dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups. Instead, Dillon gives the misleading impression that only AHF was trying to repeal Costa-Hawkins. He also feels compelled to report that AHF has “lost four high-profile California and Los Angeles ballot measures,” and provides a link to an *L.A. Times* hit piece about AHF president Michael Weinstein, showing a bias against AHF. Dillon mentions nothing about ballot measures won or lost by the

California Apartment Association and other real estate groups, and he doesn't mention any of the No on Prop 10 contributors by name.

Surprisingly, Dillon gives AHF president Michael Weinstein the last word by providing a quote from him at the end of the article. Weinstein says, "Gavin Newsom, who is the incoming governor of California, has said affirmatively that he intends to solve this [housing affordability] problem. I take that at face value. It's incumbent upon us to exhaust that opportunity before we go to the ballot again."

**Summary:** Dillon's coverage handles AHF differently compared to the No on Prop 10 campaign, going into way more detail about AHF and providing no specifics about No on Prop 10 contributors and the California Apartment Association. All of which shows a bias against AHF. Dillon also fails to mention the broad coalition of advocacy groups, unions, and civic leaders that support the Yes on Prop 10 campaign, misleading readers into thinking that only AHF is trying to repeal Costa-Hawkins and essentially dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups. Dillon also fails to disclose that he participated in the National Multifamily Housing Council's fall meeting, misleading readers into thinking that he covered that real estate lobbying event as a reporter. But Dillon shouldn't be writing anything about Proposition 10 in the first place. His participation in the NMHC's fall meeting is an obvious conflict of interest that seriously compromises his integrity and impartiality as a reporter.

**November 8, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon, who shouldn't be writing anything about Prop 10 at this point, writes an article titled [“California’s rent control initiative was crushed in the election. Don’t expect the issue to go away.”](#)

Despite participating in the National Multifamily Housing Council’s fall meeting in Washington D.C. while the Prop 10 campaign was fully underway, Dillon now writes a post-election analysis. In addition to a headline that declares Prop 10 was “crushed,” Dillon writes that the statewide ballot measure “failed resoundingly.” To further emphasize the point that Prop 10 lost big, Dillon later repeats himself, describing the housing justice movement’s effort to repeal Costa-Hawkins as “the resounding defeat of Proposition 10.”

Dillon also examines how activists, the real estate industry, and state politicians, including Gov. Gavin Newsom, may handle new legislation to address the housing affordability crisis. And while Dillon again cites the specific amount of cash that AIDS Healthcare Foundation spent on Prop 10, he provides almost no specifics about the real estate companies that delivered contributions to No on Prop 10, showing a bias against AHF. Dillon mentions that Blackstone was a “major donor,” but that’s it.

Dillon also quotes a senior vice president of the California Apartment Association high up in the article, but fails to report that the CAA ran the No on Prop 10 campaign. And he fails to report the real estate industry’s profit motive to stop the ballot measure or the billions in revenue that were at stake for the real estate industry if the ballot measure passed. He also fails to report that a broad coalition of more than 525 social justice groups, housing justice organizations, labor unions,

and civic leaders supported Prop 10, misleading readers into thinking that only AHF was trying to repeal Costa-Hawkins and essentially dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups.

**Summary:** Dillon repeats his same slanted, biased coverage of AHF; misleads readers into thinking that only AHF was trying to repeal Costa-Hawkins; fails to provide specifics about the real estate companies and groups that backed the No on Prop 10 campaign; fails to report the real estate industry's profit motive to stop Prop 10 or the billions in revenue that were at stake for the real estate industry if Prop 10 passed; and fails to report that a broad coalition of advocacy groups, unions, and civic leaders supported Prop 10, essentially dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups. Dillon should not be writing this post-election analysis in the first place – in mid-September, he participated in the fall meeting of the National Multifamily Housing Council, which was deeply involved in the No on Prop 10 campaign. By participating in the real estate lobbying event, Dillon's integrity and impartiality as a reporter had been seriously compromised.

## SB 50

### Introduction:

In December 2018, California State Sen. Scott Wiener introduces a [revamped version of SB 827 called SB 50](#). Like the previous bill, SB 50 seeks to deregulate local land-use rules, and housing justice activists again oppose the legislation. Housing Is A Human Right, the housing advocacy division of AIDS Healthcare Foundation, and other groups are still concerned that the bill will trigger gentrification and displacement in middle- and working-class communities, especially those of color. Activists also believe it's another [trickle-down housing bill that enriches luxury-housing developers](#), but doesn't focus on building the affordable housing that the poor and middle- and working-class residents need.

SB 50 is co-sponsored by California YIMBY and the California Association of Realtors. The California Apartment Association and many other real estate industry groups, including YIMBY groups, officially support the bill. The California Association of Realtors and the California Apartment Association, among other real estate insiders and groups, have already delivered [major contributions to Wiener's 2020 re-election campaign](#). Like SB 827, SB 50 will create a financial windfall for developers and others in the real estate industry if the legislation is passed.

By December 2018, *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon has participated in at least nine real estate industry or real estate industry-related events over the past two years. Those events were held by such groups and institutions as the California

Apartment Association; the California Association of Realtors; the real estate industry-funded UC Berkeley Turner Center for Housing Innovation; the Randall Lewis Seminar, which is funded by a real estate insider, at the UC Riverside Center for Sustainable Suburban Development; the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce; a joint luncheon held by the Silicon Valley Association of Realtors, the San Mateo County Association of Realtors, and the Santa Clara County Association of Realtors; the National Multifamily Housing Council; and again the UC Berkeley Turner Center for Housing Innovation.

Real estate industry events are not merely informational. They are events that are intended to push the political and financial agendas of the real estate industry. So when Dillon participates in the forums and conferences, he's participating in the political and financial agendas of the real estate industry.

On November 8, 2018, the Turner Center holds a conference that is clearly a showcase for State Sen. Scott Wiener to make his political argument for SB 50. Incredibly, *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon decides to participate in the event, which immediately brings up conflict of interest issues since Dillon knows he will extensively cover the SB 50 battle. In addition, Dillon moderates a panel in which Wiener is one of his panelists – Dillon is directly participating in a real estate industry event with a politician he must cover.

Also, by participating in the Turner Center conference, Dillon is participating in the real estate industry's effort to help Wiener pass SB 50.

Dillon's impartiality and integrity as a reporter have already been compromised by participating in the real estate industry and real estate industry-related events, providing information that real estate groups can use for their political and financial agendas. He's only further compromised by moderating a panel that includes Wiener and involves the real estate industry's effort to help Wiener's bill.

As the SB 50 fight unfolds in 2019 and 2020, Dillon will participate in at least another seven real estate industry or real estate industry-related conferences, summits, and forums – four of which will feature Wiener as a speaker or panelist. Dillon and Wiener will be inextricably linked throughout the SB 50 battle.

In the end, there's a strong case to be made that Dillon should not be covering SB 50 – his impartiality and integrity as a journalist had been seriously compromised.

## Liam Dillon's News Coverage of SB 50

**December 4, 2018:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["California legislator revives bill to boost apartment complexes near transit."](#)

Only weeks after participating in a UC Berkeley Turner Center for Housing Innovation conference with State Sen. Scott Wiener, Dillon writes about Wiener's new bill, SB 50. Dillon reports that Wiener says the legislation is needed to build more housing in order to address the housing affordability crisis – Wiener is pushing the real estate industry's "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda.

*([Read our report about Dillon's participation in real estate industry events.](#))*

Dillon quotes Wiener high up in the article. He also quotes a political director of a union, a housing justice activist, and an assistant legislative director for the League of California Cities. Dillon notes the changes made to SB 50 compared to SB 827. Oddly, he doesn't report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of the legislation. In fact, Dillon strangely makes no mention of the YIMBY movement's strong backing of the bill, even though he reported about the major clash between YIMBYs and housing justice activists over SB 827 earlier in the year.

Once again, Dillon doesn't report the [real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#). He also doesn't mention [Wiener's deep financial ties to the real estate industry via campaign contributions](#) –

a fact readers should know. Dillon fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue if SB 50 is passed. And Dillon doesn't cite the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill approved.

Dillon maintains his streak of not examining the background of Wiener – a somewhat new state senator who's trying to undertake a major overhaul of local land-use rules that will impact millions of Californians. A probing profile of Wiener, looking into his political allies, his time as a San Francisco supervisor, his political enemies, his campaign contributions, and other important facts, is begging to be done by Dillon.

Carrying out a longtime habit, Dillon ends the article with a quote, giving that person the final word. For this piece, Dillon quotes Wiener, who says, “This issue has become more and more salient over the last year. The wildfires have made clear that we can't just be business as usual.”

**Summary:** Dillon quotes various players involved in the SB 50 battle. But he fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he doesn't mention Wiener's financial connections to the real estate industry; he doesn't report about how SB 50 will be a major financial windfall for the real estate industry if the legislation is passed; he fails to report the real estate industry's profit motive to have SB 50 turned into law; he doesn't report the [real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification](#) and the [housing affordability crisis](#); he strangely doesn't report about the bill's co-sponsors, the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY; he mentions nothing about the YIMBY movement's strong support for SB 50; he doesn't disclose that he moderated a panel at a real estate industry event, featuring Wiener as one of

Dillon's panelists. By participating in a real estate industry event with Wiener in November, there's a strong case that Dillon has compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**March 20, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["Bay Area leads charge on fixing housing crisis. Will it work for the rest of California?"](#)

Dillon writes how he believes that Bay Area politicians' housing legislation "could reshape the state's housing landscape," and he includes the push to pass SB 50. It's a long think piece that generally creates a political narrative that Southern California politicians may stop SB 50 as it goes through the legislative process. Dillon quotes State Assemblyman David Chiu, Wiener, Assemblyman Miguel Santiago, and two academics. Dillon quotes a housing justice activist who has only nice words to say of Wiener, but he doesn't quote activists that oppose SB 50, including Housing Is A Human Right – one of the most prominent housing justice groups that's critical of Wiener's legislation. Dillon, as a result, purposefully shortchanges the housing justice movement. Dillon also champions the real estate industry's "build, build, build" agenda as a key solution for the housing affordability crisis.

Dillon doesn't cite the real estate industry's role in fueling the housing affordability crisis. He also doesn't mention [Wiener's deep financial ties to the real estate industry via campaign contributions](#). Dillon fails to acknowledge the massive amounts of money at play, with the real estate industry making billions in revenue

if SB 50 is passed. And Dillon doesn't cite the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill approved.

Dillon fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of the bill and that the YIMBY movement is aggressively advocating for SB 50.

For this article, Dillon ends with a quote from Assemblyman David Chiu, who gets the final word. "There were many significant leaders in Los Angeles that were happy to see it pass," says Chiu, referring to a bill that withheld state housing funding from localities where city council members blocked homeless housing projects before a formal vote.

**Summary:** Dillon continues to fail to write a probing profile of Wiener, whose legislation will impact millions of Californians; he doesn't mention Wiener's financial connections to the real estate industry; he doesn't report about how SB 50 will be a major financial windfall for the real estate industry if the legislation is passed; he fails to report the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he strangely doesn't report about the bill's co-sponsors, the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY; and he mentions nothing about the YIMBY movement's strong support for SB 50. He also doesn't quote housing justice activists who are critical of Wiener and SB 50, short-changing the housing justice movement. That includes Housing Is A Human Right, which is carrying out a high-profile opposition campaign against the legislation. Dillon doesn't cite the real estate industry's role in fueling the housing affordability crisis. There's also a strong case that Dillon has already compromised his integrity and impartiality as a

reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**NOTE:** At this point, it's become clear that Dillon, who's supposed to be an objective journalist, writes with an agenda. He carries out that agenda by including certain facts and people and groups in his stories while omitting other facts and people and groups. In fact, what Dillon doesn't report is just as important as what he does report. It's a clever, subtle way to push an agenda without being too obvious about it, and readers with no knowledge or experience of housing and land-use issues have no idea what Dillon is doing.

With his SB 50 coverage, Dillon repeatedly fails to report Wiener's financial ties to the real estate industry; he fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to mention that SB 50 will create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he fails to report the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he fails to report the real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement's aggressive support of SB 50. This is all vital information for the public to know. It helps Californians better understand the key players that are shaping a major housing and land-use policy behind the scenes, their backgrounds, and their motives for supporting SB 50.

Dillon also fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50. We only mention that point because Dillon has a history of dismissing the life-saving housing and HIV/AIDS work of AIDS

Healthcare Foundation, Housing Is A Human Right's parent organization. Dillon also has a history of handling AHF differently, and often unfairly, compared to the real estate industry and real estate organizations, such as the California Apartment Association or California YIMBY.

For example, during his Proposition 10 coverage, Dillon consistently reported AHF's contributions to the Yes on Prop 10 campaign, but wrote nothing about the California Apartment Association spearheading No on Prop 10. He also consistently failed to mention AHF's life-saving HIV/AIDS work around the world, only describing the organization as a Los Angeles-based nonprofit. And so on.

By not including Housing Is A Human Right in his SB 50 coverage, it's more proof that Dillon has some kind of agenda against AHF and Housing Is A Human Right. Because [Housing Is A Human Right was clearly one of the most prominent, active, and high-profile opponents of SB 50.](#)

In addition, Dillon's SB 50 coverage continually pushes the real estate industry's "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda as a key solution for the housing affordability crisis. And he often shortchanges or dismisses the housing justice movement, routinely writing his articles from the political establishment's perspective. It's also highly questionable that Dillon should be covering SB 50 because of his regular participation in real estate industry events with organizations and politicians that support SB 50 and because he participated as a moderator at a real estate industry event with Wiener as one of his panelists.

So we'll now more concisely analyze Dillon's SB 50 coverage, and we'll note if Dillon ever carries out the above items or corrects himself in some way, such as finally writing a probing profile of Wiener or explaining that SB 50 will provide a financial windfall for the real estate industry.

**April 16, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporters Liam Dillon and David Zahniser write an article titled ["L.A. City Council opposes state bill that would lift local zoning rules."](#)

Liam Dillon co-writes an article with David Zahniser about the L.A. City Council opposing SB 50. Since this article was co-written by Dillon and Zahniser, we can't analyze it. We don't know what Dillon wrote.

**April 22, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["California housing bill targeting wealthy cities could rezone nearly all of Palo Alto."](#)

Dillon writes about housing affordability issues in Palo Alto, California, and how Weiner's SB 50 would address that. What's interesting about this article is that Dillon once again chooses to examine an affluent city – during the Proposition 10 campaign, he looked at Mountain View's handling of rent control. With Dillon, one must always ask, why does he write certain things? What's his agenda? It's unfortunate that readers must be suspicious of Dillon, but the disturbing track record of his housing coverage and his constant participation in real estate industry events bring that suspicion upon himself – and the *L.A. Times*, for that matter.

Dillon blames Palo Alto's housing affordability problem on "a lack of sufficient home building," and writes that Wiener's SB 50 "aims to spur home building." One reason Dillon may have chosen Palo Alto is that many affluent cities opposed SB 827 and may not support SB 50. So Dillon may be trying to address that political problem. But that's the job of an activist, not an objective journalist that's writing for the *L.A. Times*.

Dillon writes that Beverly Hills Mayor John Mirisch said "Wiener's bill is an attempt to demonize single-family neighborhoods for the benefit of real estate industry profits." So Dillon indirectly reports about the real estate industry's profit motive for supporting SB 50. He doesn't examine Mirisch's claim any further, and Dillon doesn't quote a housing justice activist, dismissing the housing justice movement.

Dillon also quotes Wiener throughout the piece, and gives him the final word by ending the article with a quote from Wiener.

**Summary:** Dillon fails to report Wiener's financial ties to the real estate industry; he again fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to report the real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement's aggressive support of SB 50. Dillon fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50, and dismisses the housing justice movement. And Dillon pushes the real estate industry's "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda as a key solution for the housing affordability

crisis. There's also a strong case that Dillon has already compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**April 24, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["High-profile California housing bill clears hurdle after tense debate over local control."](#)

Dillon writes about a deal made between Wiener and State Sen. Mike McGuire over SB 50 and how the bill is moving forward. If there was ever a time to mention the behind-the-scenes players supporting SB 50, such as the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY, this is the perfect article for that. It doesn't happen.

Dillon goes into the political maneuvers to pass or oppose SB 50. He does briefly quote a housing justice activist and quickly reports about changes to Wiener's bill that will address concerns over gentrification and displacement. But he still essentially dismisses the housing justice movement – nearly everything is written from the perspective of the political establishment. This is also the perfect time to provide Housing Is A Human Right's position on the deal between McGuire and Wiener. It doesn't happen.

**Summary:** Dillon fails to report Wiener's financial ties to the real estate industry; he again fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to mention that SB 50 will create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he fails to report the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he fails to report that

the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to report the real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement's aggressive support of SB 50. And [Dillon fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50](#), and essentially dismisses the housing justice movement. There's also a strong case that Dillon has already compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**May 13, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["California could bring radical change to single-family home neighborhoods."](#)

Dillon writes about the impact of SB 50 on single-family-home neighborhoods, citing a survey by UC Berkeley Turner Center for Housing Innovation – Dillon participated in Turner Center events in 2017 and 2018, and the center is funded by the real estate industry. Dillon essentially makes the case that single-family-home zoning needs to be changed so more apartments can be built to address the housing affordability crisis. It's a position often made by the YIMBY movement.

Dillon also notes that at a housing forum in the Bay Area, Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf and Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg supported ending single-family-only zoning and that San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo was considering it. But Dillon doesn't disclose that he had participated in that housing forum, which was held on May 10, 2019, and organized by a real estate industry think tank called the Urban Land Institute.

In fact, he participated in the forum as a moderator for a panel that included Schaaf, Steinberg, and Liccardo. All of this brings up conflict-of-interest issues – Dillon participated in a real estate industry event with politicians that he has to cover as a reporter. Dillon's failure to disclose his participation in the forum also misleads readers into thinking that he was covering the event as a reporter.

Dillon also fails to quote a housing justice activist, dismissing the housing justice movement. In addition, he writes about racism and housing, but, glaringly, Dillon doesn't quote a housing justice or racial justice activist of color. But he does make a point of quoting Mott Smith, a developer and board member of the Council of Infill Builders – the real estate industry group is an official supporter of SB 50. Even more suspicious, only a few months after the publication of that piece, Dillon participates as a panelist at the Council of Infill Builders Annual Infill Conference at UCLA in July 2019 – and State Sen. Scott Wiener is the keynote speaker.

**Summary:** Dillon fails to report Wiener's financial ties to the real estate industry; he again fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to mention that SB 50 will create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to report the real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement's aggressive support of SB 50. And Dillon fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50. He also fails to quote a housing justice activist, dismissing the housing justice movement. And he fails to disclose that he participated as a moderator at the housing forum that he mentions in his article, misleading readers. There's now an even stronger case that

Dillon has compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**May 16, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“California bill to add housing in single-family home neighborhoods blocked by lawmakers.”](#)

Dillon writes about how SB 50 has been killed for the year by a state senate committee. He gives Wiener the final word by ending the article with a quote from Wiener. “We’re either serious about solving this crisis, or we aren’t,” the state senator said. “At some point, we will need to make the hard political choices necessary for California to have a bright housing future.” Dillon largely paints a picture of one noble politician, Scott Wiener, taking on the political establishment in order to address the housing affordability crisis. But that’s hardly the case considering how the real estate industry and many state politicians have lined up to support the bill – and Wiener has received hundreds of campaign contributions from the real estate industry, one of the most powerful industries in California. Dillon doesn’t quote a housing justice activist, dismissing the housing justice movement.

**Summary:** Dillon fails to report Wiener’s financial ties to the real estate industry; he again fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to mention that SB 50 will create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he fails to report the real estate industry’s obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to report the real estate industry’s role in fueling gentrification and

the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement's aggressive support of SB 50. Dillon also fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50, and fails to quote any other housing justice group, dismissing the housing justice movement. And Dillon pushes the real estate industry's "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda as a key solution for the housing affordability crisis. There's now a very strong case that Dillon has compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**May 22, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["The revenge of the suburbs: Why California's effort to build more in single-family-home neighborhoods failed."](#)

Dillon writes a long explainer piece on why SB 50 was killed. Dillon largely puts it down to the opposition of suburban homeowners, dismissing the housing justice movement's work on stopping the bill. This article was the perfect opportunity for Dillon to name key, behind-the-scenes players that backed SB 50 – such as the California Association of Realtors, California YIMBY, and the YIMBY movement. It doesn't happen.

In Dillon's attempt to blame suburban homeowners for stopping SB 50, he writes a misleading passage about the housing justice movement's lack of opposition to the bill. He writes, "Many groups that represent low-income tenants were instrumental in defeating last year's version of Wiener's bill but did not oppose SB 50." That's not accurate.

Numerous housing justice organizations and related groups officially opposed Wiener's bill, according to a [March 2019 state report](#). They included the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, Berkeley Tenants Union, Causa Justa :: Just Cause, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, Housing for All Burlingame, Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco, Jobs with Justice San Francisco, Los Angeles Tenants Union, San Francisco Tenants Union, Tenants Together, Urban Habitat, and AIDS Healthcare Foundation/Housing Is A Human Right.

**Summary:** Dillon fails to report Wiener's financial ties to the real estate industry; he again fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to mention that SB 50 will create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he fails to report the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to report the real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement's aggressive support of SB 50. Dillon fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50. And Dillon pushes the real estate industry's "build, build, build" or "trickle-down housing" agenda as a key solution for the housing affordability crisis. Dillon also dismisses the housing justice movement's work to stop the bill. There's now a very strong case that Dillon has compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**October 10, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“How lawmakers are upending the California lifestyle to fight a housing shortage.”](#)

Going after suburban homeowners once again, Dillon writes about legislation that has “quietly chipped away at zoning only for single-family homes, attracting comparably little blowback.” He briefly mentions SB 50, and he promotes the real estate industry’s “build, build, build” agenda to solve the housing affordability crisis.

What’s often missing in the argument against single-family homes is that people of color are homeowners, and they use their homes as a key way to build generational wealth – Dillon, for example, doesn’t bring up that fact in this article. YIMBY groups and others conveniently try to paint a portrait, one way or another, of only white, wealthy, NIMBY homeowners. But any changes to dismantle single-family-home zoning will impact the ability of people of color to build generational wealth. YIMBY groups don’t like to talk about that.

**January 6, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“California lawmaker again taking aim at single-family zoning.”](#)

Dillon writes about State Sen. Scott Wiener’s new changes to SB 50, which will come up for a vote in the state senate in late January. Dillon appears to contradict himself in this article.

In May 2019, Dillon wrote that “many groups that represent low-income tenants were instrumental in defeating last year’s version of Wiener’s bill but did not

oppose SB 50.” In that article, Dillon pinned the blame for the death of SB 50 on suburban homeowners, dismissing the housing justice movement. Interestingly, that’s a tactic often used by the YIMBY movement.

Now, in this article, Dillon writes that “Wiener’s previous attempts failed when groups representing lower-income communities of color argued that his bills would exacerbate displacement of residents, and activists from suburbs across the state contended [SB 50] was a threat to the character of their neighborhoods.” So now Dillon is reporting that housing justice activists and their concerns about gentrification and displacement were a key factor in stopping SB 50. Dillon can’t keep his story straight.

**Summary:** Dillon fails to report Wiener’s financial ties to the real estate industry; he again fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to mention that SB 50 will create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he fails to report the real estate industry’s obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to report the real estate industry’s role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement’s aggressive support of SB 50. Dillon fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50. And Dillon pushes the real estate industry’s “build, build, build” or “trickle-down housing” agenda as a key solution for the housing affordability crisis. There’s now a very strong case that Dillon has compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn’t be covering Wiener’s bill.

**January 23, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“New opposition leaves future of controversial housing bill SB 50 up in the air.”](#)

Dillon writes about how State Sen. Holly Mitchell and a coalition of housing justice and social justice groups oppose SB 50. He includes a passage from an opposition letter that the groups sent to State Sen. Scott Wiener: SB 50 “fails to address our most serious concerns and will exacerbate the housing challenges experienced by low-income people, people of color and other vulnerable people, the very populations being hit hardest by California’s affordability crisis. It fails to meet these communities’ housing affordability needs and has the potential to create new pressure and incentives for displacement.” Dillon also reports that a group of tenant organizations sent a similar letter to Wiener.

It’s a good time to specifically name influential groups that support and oppose SB 50, including the California Association of Realtors, the California Apartment Association, California YIMBY, numerous YIMBY groups, and numerous real estate industry groups. Dillon decides against that.

**Summary:** Dillon fails to report Wiener’s financial ties to the real estate industry; he again fails to write a probing profile of Wiener; he fails to mention that SB 50 will create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he fails to report the real estate industry’s obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he fails to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY are co-sponsors of SB 50; he fails to report the real estate industry’s role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; and he fails to mention the YIMBY movement’s aggressive support of SB 50. And [Dillon fails to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50.](#) There’s now a very

strong case that Dillon has compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't be covering Wiener's bill.

**January 30, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“California bill to dramatically increase home building fails for the third year in a row.”](#)

SB 50 fails to win enough votes in the California State Senate, and Dillon gives a blow-by-blow account of how the bill died. He leans heavily on quoting state senators, and no housing justice activists are quoted – although Dillon mentions the concerns of the housing justice movement. He also fails to report that the death of SB 50 is a major loss for the real estate industry, which would have made billions in revenue if the bill had passed. Instead, Dillon frames the SB 50 defeat as a loss for the “build, build, build” effort to address the housing affordability crisis. He doesn't quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right – completing his effort to totally dismiss Housing Is A Human Right's housing advocacy work during the SB 50 battle.

**Summary:** During the SB 50 battle, Dillon never reported about Wiener's financial ties to the real estate industry; he never wrote a probing profile of Wiener; he routinely failed to mention that SB 50 would create a financial windfall for the real estate industry; he routinely failed to report the real estate industry's obvious profit motive to have the bill passed; he failed to report that the California Association of Realtors and California YIMBY were co-sponsors of SB 50; he routinely failed to report the real estate industry's role in fueling gentrification and the housing affordability crisis; he routinely dismissed or shortchanged the housing

justice movement; and he failed to mention the YIMBY movement's aggressive support of SB 50. [Dillon also failed to quote or mention Housing Is A Human Right, one of the most prominent opponents of SB 50](#), in his articles. In other words, Dillon's reporting during SB 50 was woefully incomplete. There's a very strong case that Dillon had compromised his integrity and impartiality as a reporter when it comes to SB 50, and therefore he shouldn't have been covering Wiener's bill.

# Proposition 21

## Introduction:

In 2020, AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Housing Is A Human Right attempt to reform the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act through a state ballot measure called Proposition 21. Costa-Hawkins, as it's commonly known, is a California law that created statewide rent control restrictions in 1995. Ever since then, the housing justice movement has attempted to repeal or reform the law. Now, in 2020, AHF and Housing Is A Human Right aim to make that decades-long effort a reality.

Similar to Proposition 10 in 2018, AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Housing Is A Human Right organize a [broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders](#) to support the Yes on Prop 21 campaign, including U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, labor and civil rights icon Dolores Huerta, the California Democratic Party, and former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing Leilani Farha. Also similar to the Prop 10 battle, the California Apartment Association and numerous corporate landlords shell out millions to fund a statewide TV ad campaign to stop Prop 21. By the end of the campaign, the [real estate industry spends nearly \\$100 million to successfully kill the initiative](#).

Also once again, California YIMBY, the statewide land-use lobbying organization founded and funded by Big Tech executives, refuses to endorse Prop 21, essentially standing with the California Apartment Association and the real estate industry. In addition, Blackstone Group, one of the largest corporate landlords in the world, and

other real estate heavyweights use a [shell committee to quietly contribute to the No on Prop 21 campaign](#).

By January 2020, *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon has participated in 16 real estate industry or real estate industry-connected events as a panelist or speaker or moderator. Those summits, forums, conferences, and other events were hosted by such organizations as the California Apartment Association, the California Association of Realtors (on more than one occasion), the Council of Infill Builders, YIMBY Action, the Urban Land Institute, the National Multifamily Housing Council, and many others.

*[\(Read our report about Dillon's participation in real estate industry events.\)](#)*

In total, Dillon has participated in at least 20 real estate industry or real estate industry-related events between 2016 and 2023. The real estate industry is very comfortable with Dillon because he continually advocates for the “build, build, build” or “trickle-down housing” agenda that real estate insiders use as a political hammer to stop tenant protections, saying politicians or the public should not pass policies that harm housing production – an inaccurate claim that serves their financial interests.

Dillon is not only participating with politicians and real estate executives that he needs to cover as a reporter, but he is also providing valuable information at the real estate industry or real estate industry-related events that can be used for their political and financial agendas. And as we pointed out in our previous report about Dillon, his mere participation in the real estate industry events creates serious

conflict-of-interests and possibly other ethical issues – and his impartiality and integrity as a reporter, therefore, has been compromised.

So by 2020, Dillon should not have been covering the Proposition 21 campaign – he has participated in events with numerous real estate groups and executives who actively opposed Prop 10 and Prop 21. That includes the California Apartment Association, the California Association of Realtors, and the National Multifamily Housing Council. Dillon's editors at the *L.A. Times* allow him to write about Prop 21 anyway.

Since Dillon's troublesome Prop 21 coverage repeats many of the same failures, we'll more concisely analyze his work below.

But an important point must be made. Since Dillon repeatedly fails to mention many of the same things about Prop 21, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, and the broad coalition that supports Prop 21, one must ask, why? One must also ask, considering his participation in numerous real estate industry events, what's Dillon's agenda? He brings these questions upon himself by his repeated failures to report certain information and by his constant participation in real estate industry or real estate industry-related events.

## Liam Dillon's News Coverage of Proposition 21

**June 25, 2019:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["Rent control could be back on the California ballot in 2020."](#)

Dillon writes about the start of AIDS Healthcare Foundations's signature gathering effort to reform Costa-Hawkins through a ballot measure. He quotes AHF president Michael Weinstein and a senior vice president with the California Apartment Association, and Dillon explains how the initiative would change the state law.

But once again, Dillon fails to mention the profit motive for why landlords and landlord groups want to stop the effort to reform Costa-Hawkins, which is crucial for voters to know so they can make informed decisions on whether or not to back the initiative. He also fails to report the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry. Instead, Dillon simply repeats what the real estate industry said in 2018, writing that the "campaign against Proposition 10 argued that rent control would hurt investment in housing production, leading to a deeper shortage of available homes than exists in the state now." He also fails to report about the real estate industry's role in fueling the housing affordability crisis by carrying out predatory business practices.

Except for the California Apartment Association, Dillon also fails to mention, by name, any of the corporate landlords and real estate groups that contributed to, or took part in, the No on Prop 10 campaign and will likely oppose Prop 21. It's a

glaring omission, especially since he already wrote an article about corporate landlord contributions during the Prop 10 campaign in 2018.

Dillon also fails to report that a broad coalition of more than 525 housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders supported Prop 10, dismissing the rest of the housing justice movement and giving the impression that only AHF sought to repeal Costa-Hawkins.

And while Dillon reports the exact amount that AHF has contributed to the new ballot measure effort, he fails to write anything about what the real estate industry has raised. From the start, he's already handling AHF differently compared to the real estate industry, showing a bias against AHF.

Dillon also provides no information, once again, about AHF's longtime, life-saving HIV/AIDS work around the globe – only describing the organization as Los Angeles-based. And he fails to mention the organization's new housing provider division, Healthy Housing Foundation, which quickly creates new low-income and homeless housing by buying and renovating single-room-occupancy hotels in the Los Angeles area. Dillon also fails to report about AHF's housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right, which battles the real estate industry, the YIMBY movement, and pro-Big Real Estate politicians and advocates for the protection of tenants and the production of more affordable housing. These are all vital facts for voters, helping them to make informed decisions.

In addition, Dillon provides links in this article to his coverage about how Prop 10 failed, but curiously doesn't link to his October 2018 article about campaign

contributions from corporate landlords to No on Prop 10. Another questionable omission.

**Summary:** Dillon continues to handle AHF differently compared to the real estate industry, once again showing a bias against AHF. He fails to give any important background information to voters about AHF's life-saving HIV/AIDS work and its housing provider division, Healthy Housing Foundation, and its housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right. Dillon also simply repeats the real estate industry's "build, build, build" political argument, but reports nothing about the real estate industry's profit motive to stop the new ballot measure effort or the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry. He also fails to report about the real estate industry's role in fueling the housing affordability crisis by carrying out predatory business practices. And except for the California Apartment Association, Dillon fails to cite, by name, the corporate landlords and other real estate interests that opposed Prop 10 and will likely try to stop the new initiative. He also fails to mention the broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that supported Prop 10, dismissing those groups and giving the impression that only AHF sought to repeal Costa-Hawkins.

The same or similar failures in Dillon's reporting on Prop 21 will be repeated over and over, indicating a bias in favor of the real estate industry and against AHF. Dillon also shows a possible bias against rent control. After all, he has been a strong advocate for the real estate industry's "build, build, build" agenda, claiming it's the key way to solve the housing affordability crisis. And whenever necessary, Dillon repeatedly brings up the industry's argument that rent control will harm

housing production – while also failing to report the industry’s profit motive to kill rent regulations.

**September 23, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Proposition 21 rent control expansion faces steep hurdle to passage, new poll shows.”](#)

Dillon writes about a UC Berkeley poll that finds only 37 percent of likely voters support Prop 21. He only quotes poll director Mark DiCamillo. Dillon specifically states that AHF is “bankrolling” Yes on Prop 21, but provides no details about who’s contributing to No on Prop 21 and who’s running that campaign – the California Apartment Association is leading the main No on Prop 21 committee and corporate landlords Essex Property Trust, AvalonBay Communities, and Equity Residential, among others, are shelling out millions in campaign cash.

Dillon also specifically states that AHF “has raised nearly \$23 million for its campaign.” He reports nothing about how much No on Prop 21 has raised. If Dillon can look up AHF’s state campaign filings, he can certainly take a look at No on Prop 21’s filings. Dillon also only describes AHF as Los Angeles-based, failing to provide important background information to voters.

**Summary:** Dillon continues to handle AHF differently compared to the real estate industry, once again showing a bias in his coverage against AHF. He fails to give important background information to voters about AHF’s life-saving HIV/AIDS work and its housing provider division, Healthy Housing Foundation, and its housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right. Dillon reports nothing

about the real estate industry's profit motive to stop Prop 21 or the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry. He fails to cite, by name, the California Apartment Association, corporate landlords and other real estate interests that oppose Prop 21. He also fails to mention the broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that support Prop 21, dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups and giving the impression that only AHF seeks to reform Costa-Hawkins.

**October 9, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["How California's Prop 21 is different from the rent control initiative two years ago."](#)

Only weeks until Election Day, Dillon provides background on the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act and an analysis of what Prop 21 would do if passed. He quotes the campaign director for Yes on Prop 21 and a spokesman for No on Prop 21. Once again, Dillon cites the flawed rent control study by Stanford University. He also mentions a pro-rent control study by USC and quotes its co-author.

This time, Dillon finally provides some information about the grassroots coalition supporting Prop 21 and the real estate industry groups and corporate landlords that oppose the initiative. He reports exactly what AHF has contributed to the Yes on Prop 21 campaign. And while Dillon reports how much money the No on Prop 21 campaign has raised and names some of the top contributors, he doesn't cite specifically how much those corporate landlords shelled out, which shows a bias against AHF.

Interestingly, Dillon alone is credited for writing the article, but at the bottom of the piece, it's noted that two other *L.A. Times* reporters contributed. Perhaps that's why this article finally has some details about the players behind the Yes on Prop 21 and No on Prop 21 campaigns – although the California Apartment Association, which is leading the opposition effort, is not mentioned.

While Dillon links to two articles he had written about Prop 10 in 2018, he doesn't link to his piece about corporate landlords contributing to the No on Prop 10 campaign.

**Summary:** Dillon continues to handle AHF differently compared to the real estate industry, showing a bias against AHF. He also fails to give any important background information to voters about AHF's life-saving HIV/AIDS work and its housing provider division, Healthy Housing Foundation, and its housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right. Dillon repeats the real estate industry's "build, build, build" political argument, but reports nothing about the real estate industry's profit motive to stop Prop 21 or its role in fueling the housing affordability crisis by carrying out predatory business practices. He also fails to report the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry, and fails to inform readers that the California Apartment Association is leading No on Prop 21.

**November 2, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["Prop 21: Everything you need to know about rent control measure."](#)

Strangely, Dillon writes another explainer piece about Prop 21 – he already wrote one on October 8 with the help of two other *L.A. Times* reporters. It's a very short

article, but he manages to emphasize the No on Prop 21 campaign's politically convenient, self-serving argument that rent control would "hurt housing affordability in the long term by limiting the supply of apartments." Dillon writes nothing about the real estate industry's profit motive to kill the measure or its role in fueling the housing affordability crisis by carrying out predatory business practices. Unlike the other explainer piece, Dillon gives no information about the broad coalition supporting Prop 21.

Dillon reports that AHF, which he only describes as an L.A.-based nonprofit and provides no further background information, has contributed more than \$40 million to Yes on Prop 21. But he doesn't provide the exact amounts that No on Prop 21 contributors have delivered, and doesn't report that the California Apartment Association is leading the opposition campaign. He does name corporate landlords Essex Property Trust, Equity Residential, and AvalonBay Communities as No on Prop 21 contributors.

In this article, Dillon provides a link to an *L.A. Times* story titled "[Billions have been spent on California's ballot measure battles. But this year is unlike any other.](#)" Included in that piece is a kind of campaign contributions database created by the *L.A. Times*. When a reader scrolls down, he or she sees Proposition 21 and a two-paragraph caption.

Whoever wrote it provides no information about Essex Property Trust, Equity Residential, AvalonBay Communities, and other corporate landlords – although they've been involved in controversies over the years, including being accused of predatory business practices.

Instead, the *L.A. Times* writes the entire caption about AHF: “The Los Angeles-based nonprofit AIDS Healthcare Foundation did not succeed in bankrolling its most expensive attempt yet to expand rent control. The measure would have permitted communities to adopt greater protections by allowing limits on rent increases in buildings more than 15 years old. The foundation’s president, Michael Weinstein, is well-known as an aggressive, litigious leader thanks to his history of sponsoring high-profile ballot measures, including another on this list.” In that caption, there’s a link to an *L.A. Times* hit piece about Weinstein – the same hit piece that Dillon routinely linked to during the Prop 10 campaign.

Besides the fact that the caption is poorly written, it’s astounding that the *L.A. Times* is so blatantly biased against AHF, failing to include even a sentence about Essex Property Property Trust, Equity Residential, and the California Apartment Association, which is running the No on Prop 21 campaign.

Lastly, on October 31, 2018, Dillon wrote an article about the corporate landlords delivering campaign cash to the No on Prop 10 campaign and how they were concerned about their bottom lines. In 2020, he fails to write a similar kind of article. Why?

**Summary:** Dillon continues to handle AHF differently compared to the real estate industry, showing a bias against AHF. He fails to give any important background information to voters about AHF’s life-saving HIV/AIDS work and its housing provider division, Healthy Housing Foundation, and its housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right. Dillon also simply repeats the real estate industry’s “build, build, build” political argument, but reports nothing about the real estate industry’s profit motive to stop Prop 21 or its role in fueling the housing

affordability crisis by carrying out predatory business practices. He also fails to report the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry. And he fails to mention the broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that support Prop 21, dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups and giving the impression that only AHF aims to reform Costa-Hawkins.

**November 3, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled [“Californians once again reject bid to expand rent control in the state.”](#)

Dillon writes about the defeat of Prop 21. He starts the article with: “California voters have again decisively rejected a bid to expand rent control statewide.” He adds that “landlord groups have convinced voters that stricter limits on rent hikes are not a solution to California’s housing affordability problems.” He also writes that opponents said “rent control would slow homebuilding.” He fails to mention the real estate industry’s profit motive to stop Prop 21 or its role in fueling the housing affordability crisis, but repeats its “build, build, build” argument. He also fails to report the billions in revenue that were at stake for the real estate industry.

Dillon quotes California Apartment Association CEO Tom Bannon, which is interesting. He goes to the CAA for quotes when necessary, but routinely doesn’t report that the powerful landlord lobbying group led the No on Prop 21 campaign. Dillon also quotes the campaign director for Yes on Prop 21.

Dillon again reports that exact amount AHF has contributed to the Yes on Prop 21 campaign, but doesn’t provide exact amounts from the No on Prop 21 campaign’s

top contributors. And he only describes AHF as Los Angeles-based. Dillon fails to give details about the broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that supported Prop 21, dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups.

**Summary:** Dillon continues to handle AHF differently compared to the real estate industry, showing a bias against AHF. He fails to give any important background information to readers about AHF's life-saving HIV/AIDS work and its housing provider division, Healthy Housing Foundation, and its housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right. Dillon also simply repeats the real estate industry's "build, build, build" political argument, but reports nothing about the real estate industry's profit motive to stop Prop 21 or its role in fueling the housing affordability crisis. He also fails to report the billions in revenue that were at stake for the real estate industry. And he fails to mention the broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that support Prop 21, dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups and giving the impression that only AHF aimed to reform Costa-Hawkins.

**November 4, 2020:** *Los Angeles Times* reporter Liam Dillon writes an article titled ["Why liberal California keeps saying no to rent control."](#)

Dillon provides his analysis of why "liberal" California has rejected the rent control push of Prop 10 and Prop 21. He quotes Assemblyman David Chiu, pollster Mark DiCamillo, a California Apartment Association vice president, and AHF president Michael Weinstein.

Dillon again fails to mention the real estate industry's profit motive to stop Prop 21 or the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry. Instead, he repeats the industry's argument, writing that opponents cite concerns that "rent control could hurt the availability of rental housing, making the state less affordable overall."

Dillon also mentions what "landlord groups" argued in their No on Prop 21 advertisements, but fails to cite what Yes on Prop 21 ads said. He also fails to report the broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders that supported Prop 21, dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups.

Now that the campaign is over, Dillon does report, in a vague way, that the California Apartment Association was "behind both opposition campaigns," referring to Prop 10 and Prop 21. It makes one wonder why Dillon didn't report that *before* the campaign ended.

To the very end, Dillon continues to handle AHF differently compared to the real estate industry, showing a bias against AHF. He fails to give any important background information to readers about AHF's life-saving HIV/AIDS work and its housing provider division, Healthy Housing Foundation, and its housing advocacy division, Housing Is A Human Right. Dillon also simply repeats the real estate industry's "build, build, build" political argument, but reports nothing about the real estate industry's profit motive to stop Prop 21 or its role in fueling the housing affordability crisis. He also fails to report the billions in revenue that are at stake for the real estate industry. And he fails to mention the broad coalition of housing justice groups, social justice organizations, labor unions, and civic leaders

that supported Prop 21, dismissing the housing justice movement and other groups and giving the impression that only AHF sought to reform Costa-Hawkins.

If anything, Dillon has been consistent in his flawed, biased coverage of AHF and Prop 21, indicating the reporter is carrying out an agenda. It also misinforms readers and prevents them from making informed decisions at the ballot box.