



California  
Association  
of Local Housing  
Finance Agencies

**CAL-ALHFA**

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1724 10th Street, Suite 110  
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## **CAL-ALHFA 2020 Virtual Vision** **HOUSING for EVERYONE**

**October 21, 2020**

### **PRESENTERS**

### **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

Senator Scott Wiener  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 5100  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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Senator Scott Wiener was born in Philadelphia and grew up in southern New Jersey. Scott earned his BA from Duke University and his JD from Harvard Law School. He spent a year in Chile on a Fulbright Scholarship. Before his election to the Board of Supervisors, Scott worked as a litigation attorney and as Deputy City Attorney. He has served as Chairman for the San Francisco Democratic Party and is a leader in the San Francisco LGBT community. Senator Wiener authored a number of first-in-the-nation laws, including mandating fully paid parental leave for all working parents, requiring water recycling and solar power in new developments, and banning public spending in states with LGBT hate laws. He co-authored legislation which aims to change laws that make it a felony to expose someone to HIV without their knowledge. Scott has lived in the Castro neighborhood in San Francisco for over 21 years.

Senator Wiener's legislative interests include: Housing, Transportation, Energy, Health, Human Services, LGBT issues, Environmental Protection, and Education





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## STATE PROGRAMS PANEL

Sonja Palladino  
Deputy Director for Legislation  
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Sonja Palladino was appointed on January 9, 2018 as the Deputy Director of Legislation at the California Department of Housing and Community Development by Gov. Jerry Brown. Sonja was previously the Legislative Director for California State Assemblyman Todd Gloria in 2016 and 2017. Sonja previously served as the Capitol Director for California Assemblyman Susan A. Bonilla in 2016. She was Bonilla's Legislative Director from 2013 to 2016. She was also the Senior Legislative Assistant for California Assemblyman Bob Blumenfield in 2011 and 2012.



Francesc R. Martí  
Director of Legislation and Policy  
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Francesc Martí has been the California Housing Finance Agency's Director of Legislation and Policy since 2018, during which time he has led CalHFA's extensive collaboration with legislators and policymakers at the federal, state and local levels. Martí has also worked extensively with Governor Gavin Newsom's Administration on its housing initiatives and has played a key role in the design and expansion of several of CalHFA's Multifamily programs, most notably a first-of-its-kind-in-California Bond Recycling Program.

Prior to his tenure at CalHFA, Martí served as Assistant Commissioner for Government Affairs at New York City's Department of Housing Preservation & Development, heading a division that negotiated legislation at the local, state and federal levels. During his tenure there, Martí worked with the New York State legislature to enact the nation's largest property tax incentive program for multifamily development.





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Ms. Blackwell currently serves as the Executive Director of both the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee & of the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee. She is also a past Board Member of California's Local Agency Investment Fund.

She completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Chicago as an economics major and earned her Juris Doctor degree at Columbia University School of Law. She also earned an advanced law degree (LLM) in oil and gas law from Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen Scotland where she focused on laws surrounding water protection and the hydro-fracking industry in the United States

Ms. Blackwell has worked extensively as a bond attorney focusing on multifamily and single family housing finance and other infrastructure financing. Ms. Blackwell also previously served as the CFO of the Port of Oakland; the CFO of the City of Atlanta; and as the Purchaser and Director of Contract Administration for the City and County of San Francisco. In addition, she has served as a board member and treasurer of the City of Atlanta's three pension funds - the Police Pension Board, the Firefighters Pension Board, and the General Employees' Pension Board. Ms. Blackwell began her career as a public finance attorney on Wall Street, specializing in financing both housing and other infrastructure projects.

Additionally, Ms. Blackwell was Executive Director of the Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce; treasurer of the Northern California Supplier Development Council; and was a member of the Oakland Workforce Development Board.

She also served as board member of the Bayview YMCA in San Francisco, as well as for the Bayview Opera House, each of which provides a safe and wholesome place for children during after-school hours. In addition, she has served as treasurer of 100 Black Women of the Bay Area - an organization that supports programs for young women and girls.

Ms. Blackwell is the daughter of tax attorney Joseph Blackwell and niece of the world renowned U.C. Berkley statistician David Blackwell.





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## **STATE LEGISLATION PANEL**

Erin Riches  
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Erin Riches is Chief Consultant to the California State Senate Housing Committee, chaired by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco). The committee was formed in December 2018, when the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee was split. The committees had been combined since 2005.

Ms. Riches joined the Transportation and Housing Committee in January 2013. She was primarily responsible for bills related to a variety of issues including driver's licensing, air quality, ports and goods movement, and federal transportation funding.

Before joining the committee, Ms. Riches worked for five and a half years as a policy consultant at the State Senate Office of Research, where she focused on housing, local government, land use, transportation, and veterans affairs issues.

From 1999 to 2007, Ms. Riches served as a policy analyst at the non-profit California Budget Project (later renamed the California Budget and Policy Center), focusing on issues including housing, local government, and transportation. Prior to that, Ms. Riches was a legislative aide to then-Assemblymember Michael Sweeney (D-Hayward). Ms. Riches began her career at the Assembly Speaker's Office of Majority Services and then the office of Assembly Speaker Willie L. Brown, Jr.

Ms. Riches earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in History and International Relations from the University of California, Davis and her Master of Public Policy and Administration from California State University, Sacramento.





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Lisa is the Chief Consultant to the Assembly Committee on Housing and Community Development. She joined the committee thirteen years ago as a principal consultant and became chief consultant seven years ago. She works on the following issues for the committee: housing finance, homelessness, common interest developments, redevelopment, building standards, and budget issues. She has a Master of Science in Community Development from the University of California, Davis. Prior to joining the committee she worked for the Nehemiah Corporation of American for five years.



Ray Pearl  
Executive Director  
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Ray became the Executive Director of the California Housing Consortium in March 2009. As the Executive Director, Ray is responsible for leading the premier “big tent” housing advocacy organization representing the development, building, financial, and public sectors united in a non-partisan effort to advance affordable housing and community development across California.

Prior to joining the Consortium, Ray spent many years in the private sector working in the government affairs and land use planning departments of two major Southern California development companies. He also has extensive experience in association management and housing policy advocacy through his service as the Executive Director of the Greater Los Angeles/Ventura Chapter of the Building Industry Association of Southern California. In addition, Ray is a former US Naval officer.

Ray received his BA degree from UCLA and his Masters degree in Public Administration from the University of Washington. Ray’s community involvement includes work as a former board member of HomeAid Los Angeles/Ventura, the Child Care Resource Center in the San Fernando Valley, a founding board member of THE Foundation for Las Virgenes Schools and as President of his children’s elementary school Parent Faculty Club. He was also active with his children’s soccer teams through AYSO and was elected to serve on the Westlake Village City Council in 2018.





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Mark Stivers  
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Mark Stivers joined the California Housing Partnership in 2019 as the Director of Legislative and Regulatory Advocacy. Mark previously served as the acting Deputy Director for the Division of Financial Assistance at the California Department of Housing and Community Development and for four years as the Executive Director of the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee. Prior to his tenure at TCAC, Mark served 16 years as the primary housing consultant to the California Senate. Mark began his career as a fair housing counselor with two Bay Area nonprofit fair housing organizations.



Wendy DeWitt  
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Wendy DeWitt has 30 years of public agency experience with SDHC, including serving as Policy Director, participating in strategic planning and revenue development for SDHC, as well as advocacy for affordable housing policies and programs at the state and federal levels. She works with the Senior Vice President of Strategic Operations and Policy and SDHC's policy team to advocate for effective affordable housing policies and resources.

She previously served as SDHC's Vice President of Real Estate Programs and Special Initiatives, where she was involved in the creation and implementation of Special Initiatives, such as SDHC's "Addressing the Housing Affordability Crisis" reports, including "San Diego Housing Production Objectives 2018 – 2028."

Her previous roles throughout SDHC's Real Estate Division also included: managing the development of affordable housing owned and operated by SDHC; implementing the startup and operation of SDHC's nonprofit affiliate, Housing Development Partners; and serving in the Multifamily Finance Department, which provides gap financing for affordable housing developments.

Wendy holds a B.B.A in Business Administration from the University of Kentucky and a law degree from California Western School of Law in San Diego. She is a member of the California State Bar and is the current President of the California Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies and a former board member of the San Diego Housing Federation.





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Rochelle is the President and CEO responsible for IHO's housing development, new project and program initiatives, business development relations, and oversees legislative, advocacy and policy interests as well as stakeholder relations. She brings a diverse background in architecture, design, construction administration, community planning, writing, and cultural tourism. Rochelle is the past President of the Southern California Association of NonProfit Housing (SCANPH), and serves on several public and nonprofit boards, services committees, and leader groups.



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Julie Romey is a Senior Principal in the Los Angeles office of Keyser Marston Associates, Inc. Since rejoining the firm in 2000, Julie has provided public and private clients with real estate economic analysis, and with expertise in market rate and affordable housing in California.

For more than 20 years, Julie has analyzed real estate projects on a market and site-specific level. Before joining Keyser Marston's San Diego office in 1994, Julie worked for Grubb & Ellis Commercial Real Estate and Foodmaker, Inc., both in San Diego. During Julie's three year tenure in San Diego, she worked on the Naval Training Center base closure assignment and affordable housing projects in downtown San Diego. After completing graduate school in 1999, Julie return to Southern California to work for Ernst & Young's Real Estate Consulting Group where she provided financial analysis for corporate real estate clients.

In Keyser Marston's Los Angeles office, Julie has had a role in structuring development agreements for mixed-use and affordable residential projects in Anaheim, Brea, Fullerton, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Pasadena, Carson, Buena Park, Huntington Beach, Burbank, Hollywood, Simi Valley, Rialto and Signal Hill. She has also assisted redevelopment/successor agencies and cities with developing affordable housing strategies.





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Mary Ellen Shay is the founder and owner of M.E. Shay & Co. Real Estate Market Analysis, a market research firm that specializes in affordable housing projects. She is also a registered lobbyist representing Public Housing Authorities and Local Housing Finance Agencies in California and Washington, DC. Mary Ellen was a VISTA volunteer in Shasta County and co-founded the Self Help Home Improvement Project (SHHIP) with her fellow VISTAs. She also worked for the City of Redding and State Department of Housing and Community Development before starting M.E. Shay & Co.

Mary Ellen is the past President and founding member of the National Association of Housing Market Analysts. She is a former member and Chair of the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, and is also a member of the Board of the California Housing Consortium. Over the years she has taught numerous affordable housing development courses, and has written many articles on real estate market analysis and affordable housing development for trade publications. She attended Washington University in St. Louis and graduated from San Francisco State. She is still a very proud Gator.