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Save Berkeley's Neighborhoods opposes UC Berkeley's Appeal of Enrollment Cap; adding 3,050 students with no additional housing will create Santa Barbara-style housing crisis

(February 14, 2022) Last Thursday, February 10, 2022, the California Court of Appeal rejected UC Berkeley's request to stay the effect of the enrollment cap for 2022-23 that the Alameda County Superior Court imposed due to UC Berkeley's failure to comply with laws requiring that it analyze and mitigate the housing impacts of its enrollment increases. In denying the stay, the Court of Appeal noted "... that the judgment in this case was entered August 23, 2021. The Regents filed an appeal from that judgment on October 18, 2021, yet they waited more than three months before seeking a stay or supersedeas."

Today, UC Berkeley filed a petition with the California Supreme Court again requesting to stay the enrollment cap. Save Berkeley's Neighborhoods will oppose this request.

"UC Berkeley has repeatedly rebuffed SBN's offers to reach a reasonable settlement concerning UC's failure to house its additional students," said Phil Bokovoy, President of Save Berkeley's Neighborhoods. "In addition, UC Berkeley students themselves have repeatedly said that UC should stop increasing enrollment until it can provide housing for its students. We are all very concerned that UC Berkeley will create a housing crisis next fall similar to last fall's crisis in Santa Barbara."

UCB wants to admit 3,050 additional students with no provision for them to be housed. In SBN's suit against UC under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Judge Brad Seligman of the Alameda County Superior Court agreed with SBN's position that UC must stop increasing enrollment in Berkeley until it complies with laws requiring that it analyze and mitigate the housing impacts of its enrollment increases. Berkeley residents don't want a repeat of the housing crisis in Santa Barbara during the current school year, where students were living in cars and the university had to put them up in hotels due to over enrollment.

UC's own data show that California residents know how bad the housing situation is in Berkeley because Berkeley came in 5th place for resident student applications for the 2021-22 school year, after UCLA, UCSD, UC Irvine, and Santa Barbara

UC's own data show that UC can easily accommodate the court-ordered enrollment cap without harming in-state student prospects by limiting offers to out of state, international, and certificate program students. In 2021, UCB enrolled 3,429 additional students for whom UC has no obligation to serve under the California Master Plan for Higher Education.

Between 2005 and 2018, UCB increased student enrollment by 9,155, from 31,800 to 40,955. In the 2019-20 academic year, UCB increased student enrollment to 43,185. In the 2020-21 academic year, UCB student enrollment fell by 858 students to 42,347, or a 1.9% decrease. In the 2021-22 academic year, UCB increased student enrollment to 45,036 or an increase over pre pandemic levels of 1,851 or 4.2%.

Save Berkeley's Neighborhoods is a non-profit organized to provide education and advocacy to improve the quality of life, protect the environment and implement best planning practices for Berkeley citizens.