



## AB 1359

### Community Health: Access to Parks and Recreational Space

#### SUMMARY

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Assembly Bill 1359 amends the Quimby Act to allow local agencies to allocate existing funds, used for the purpose of developing and rehabilitating parks and recreational facilities, to areas within the local agency that are most in need. This bill also allows for funds to be used to create joint use agreements between school districts, universities, counties and cities.

#### BACKGROUND

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Local governments in California provide a critical role in the effort to set aside parkland and open space for recreational purposes. Since the passage of the Quimby Act in 1975, cities and counties have been authorized to require developers to set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. Per the Quimby Act, these funds are to “serve the subdivision” being developed. Thus, the resources stay in the area undergoing development. Areas with little to no development do not receive these resources, many of which are park poor.

Low-income communities and communities of color suffer the most from disparities in access to green space and from health and social problems that stem from such inequalities. The fact is that low-income people of color disproportionately lack equal access to parks, school fields, beaches, trails and forests, which has been in part a result of unequal land use policy.

In a 2011 study, The City Project found that many areas in California and in particular Los Angeles County can be considered park poor. “Park poor” defined in California law refers to any geographic area that provides less than three acres of green space per 1,000 residents.

Investing in California’s parks and creating equitable access to green space throughout the state would create healthier communities and decrease childhood obesity. Parks also provide an important sense of community pride and are low or no-cost places to exercise and celebrate community events, family events, heritage and art.

#### EXISTING LAW

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Currently, California state law requires developers to set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees known as “Quimby fees” for park or recreational improvements.

The 1965 Quimby Act authorizes local governments to spend Quimby funds within one or two miles of a new subdivision or development.

#### STATUS

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