



STEPHANIE VALADEZ
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July 3, 2025

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Room 8140
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 736 (Wicks), as amended on April 10, 2025
Pending Referral in the California State Senate
Position: Support if Amended

Dear Assemblymember Wicks:

The University of California Graduate and Professional Council (UCGPC), which represents the collective voice of over 60,000 graduate and professional students across all ten UC campuses, writes to share our position of *support if amended* on AB 736, the Affordable Housing Bond Act of 2026. As Chair of the Senate Housing Committee, your leadership on expanding housing access and affordability is essential, and we believe this bond presents a critical opportunity to include the housing needs of graduate and professional students—who too often remain invisible in statewide housing discussions. We urge the committee to amend AB 736 to explicitly include public higher education for the specific purpose of funding more student housing.

As graduate and professional students, many of us are non-traditional: we pursue advanced degrees while supporting families, teaching, conducting research, and often working for the university. This means that housing insecurity does not just affect our academic focus—it threatens our ability to support loved ones and sustain our contributions to California’s research and innovation. Many UC students are worried about the availability, affordability, and access to graduate student housing. Too often, administrators expect us to be “resourceful”—but caregiving graduate students, student parents, and those on modest teaching stipends cannot simply absorb the cost of housing.

These are not abstract issues. When the state previously invested through the Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program, UC leveraged every dollar with exceptional impact—creating thousands of beds at deeply subsidized rates. Graduate students accessed family housing and proximity to campus, reducing commute burdens, improving research productivity, and supporting diverse student needs. UCGPC has seen direct impact through our mental health and basic needs priorities, where stable housing is essential to non-academic success.

We appreciate your leadership and consideration of this amendment. California’s graduate and professional students stand ready to partner with you to ensure that AB 736 delivers equitable housing solutions—not just for undergraduates, but for all who invest years in advancing California’s knowledge and innovation economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Valadez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being the most prominent.

Stephanie Valadez
President | UC Graduate and Professional Council