

# Editorial: Don't bend Calif. environmental rules for Olympics

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California lawmakers are – again – considering a last-minute bill that would let deep-pocketed developers and favored projects cut corners on the state's landmark environmental law.

State Sen. Steven Bradford, D-Gardena, introduced a bill that was pitched as a way to dramatically speed the construction of transit lines and parking lots needed for the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 2028. Bradford's big idea? Exempting the projects from all the studies and public input required by the California Environmental Quality Act. The primary beneficiaries of Senate Bill 789, however, would be the proposed Clippers arena and other projects in Inglewood's sports and entertainment district.

Bradford's bill is the latest salvo in the ongoing fight over CEQA, which was enacted more than 40 years ago as a way to inform, protect and empower the public by requiring developers to disclose the environmental effects of their projects and to mitigate any harm they may cause. While CEQA is a vital tool that has made countless projects better since its inception, it is also too easily used to tie up projects with costly and time-consuming lawsuits for reasons that have nothing to do with environmental protection.

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