



City of Santa Barbara

Office of the Mayor

SantaBarbaraCA.gov

RRowse@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Randy Rowse
Mayor

May 27, 2025

City Hall
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA
93101-1990

The Honorable Senator Ashby
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Room 7630
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 456 (Ashby): Contractors: Exemptions: Muralists
City of Santa Barbara – Notice of Support**

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA
93102-1990

Tel: (805) 564-5322
Fax: (805) 564-5475

Dear Senator Ashby:

On behalf of the City of Santa Barbara, I write to express our strong support for Senate Bill 456, which would exempt muralists from the requirement to obtain a contractor's license from the California Contractors State License Board (CSLB) before undertaking public or private art commissions. This thoughtful legislation will provide much-needed clarity for local governments and ensure that artists can continue to enrich public spaces without facing unnecessary regulatory barriers.

Santa Barbara has a long and proud tradition of supporting public art as a vital part of civic life, cultural expression, and placemaking. Our public art installations—including murals—contribute to community identity, foster tourism and economic development, and create vibrant, inclusive public spaces. However, recent interpretations of CSLB regulations have introduced uncertainty into the process of commissioning muralists, suggesting that artists must hold a contractor's license even when engaging in non-structural, artistic work. This creates both legal ambiguity and an unreasonable hurdle for working artists and the cities that support them.

SB 456 appropriately distinguishes artistic services from construction contracting and reaffirms that muralists—who are often small business owners or independent creatives—should not be subject to licensure requirements intended for the building trades. By clarifying this exemption, the bill upholds the intent of public art programs, reduces administrative burden on local governments, and preserves access to creative opportunities for California artists.

The City of Santa Barbara deeply values the role of artists in shaping our built environment and promoting cultural engagement. We thank you for championing this important legislation and for recognizing the unique nature of public art in our communities.

For these reasons, the City of Santa Barbara is pleased to support SB 456 and urges its passage.

Sincerely,


Mayor Randy Rowse
City of Santa Barbara

cc: Senator Monique Limón
Assemblymember Gregg Hart