

Land-Use

Legislation

Your editorial (Aug. 26) approving the Coastal Commission legislation and urging approval of a similar law (AB 15) governing agricultural lands shows the typical short-sighted, shallow thinking leading to laws that severely damage most Californians.

The Coastal Preservation Act has created two additional, unnecessary levels of state government responsible for local planning decisions. Dollars that should be spent for beach park acquisitions are wasted on bureaucratic paperwork. The intent and actions of the commission and its staff has been to prevent use of the coast by Californians; i.e., the denial of proposed Doheny Beach Park expansion.

Local planning authorities spend weeks carefully deliberating each issue, receive lengthy public input from directly affected persons, visit the sites in question and make decisions for the good of the community. The state agency must act on each case in a matter of minutes, and because the state offices are in San Francisco or Sacramento, affected parties have little or no input.

Coastal legislation has put maximum decision-making power into the hands of a non-elected, non-responsible group of individuals with the least information on the issues to be decided.

We are facing a housing crisis in California. There are no food shortages in our supermarkets. California's agriculture is dependent on more than cropland. Packing sheds, processing plants, equipment manufacture and sales facilities, homes for agricultural and agricultural-related workers, and the necessary support infrastructure are all essential ingredients of our agricultural economy. Statewide control would cause eventual suffocation of a healthy industry.

It is true that millions of arable acres have been developed for homes and industry in California, but this development has financed and supported development of millions of acres of agricultural land formerly fallow.

Why does The Times feel Sacramento is the sole repository of all wisdom in California? Surely the community health, esthetics, and quality of life referred to in the editorial would be much worse if the people living on land which has been developed in the past 20 years were to be crowded into existing cities as proposed by Assemblyman Charles Warren's ill-conceived AB 15.

S. SALKIN
Orange