February 19, 2026

The Honorable Chris Ward
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite
Sacramento CA 95814

Re: **SUPPORT- AB 1954**: Blocking Illegitimate Reservations and Protecting Equitable Access to California's Publicly Owned Golf Courses Act

Dear Assemblymember Ward:

The California Alliance for Golf (CAG) and undersigned are pleased to support your Assembly Bill (AB) 1954 that would prohibit an operator of a third-party golf reservation service platform from listing, advertising, promoting, or selling reservations for a publicly owned golf course operator without a written agreement.

There are over 220 golf courses in California that are municipally owned by cities, counties, charter cities, and the state. As part of publicly owned park systems, these courses operate per business models that eschew maximal revenue generation in favor of making them maximally available to local residents, seniors, juniors, school athletes, local clubs and civic organizations. Because California's urban areas are among the most golf-starved in the nation, this model creates a demand for tee times second to none. It has also created opportunities for 3rd party tee time brokers to capture and broker tee times at inflated prices and in the process substantially reduce the already strained supply of recreational opportunities available to California residents.

When the ubiquity of 3rd party brokering became a front page story in Los Angeles and other California urban areas in 2024, municipalities adopted various forms of reservation protocols that mitigated the problem but in the end were not capable of solving it – protocols that involved additional expense to their patrons.

In summer 2025 the United States Attorney's Office indicted two Los Angeles based tee time brokers for failing to report $1.1 million in income, $700,000.00 of which the indictment alleges was made from the resale of tee times at 17 Southern California municipal golf courses over the course of two years. It remains to be seen whether that allegation can be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, but regardless, the fact remains their practice of tee time brokering was permissible under California's Civil Codes. It is only the allegation that they failed to report and remit taxes on the income derived from the otherwise lawful activity that may have violated the law if proven to be true by the very high standard required by the criminal law.

AB 1954 would give the state's cities, counties, charter cities, and the state itself a tool in the form of a civil remedy that they would have to initiate of their own volition and at their own expense to restrain 3rd party brokering that is not performed by consent (written agreement) of the parties. This is a tool that they do not now have and one that only the state can provide.

To be clear; it's important to emphasize that this bill does not in any way affect agreements that are freely entered into for ostensible mutual benefit. It only affects brokering without the consent of the public agency that owns the golf course or the management group that the public agency has put under contract to operate its golf course. There are many well-known and popular vendors in that space. They operate by written agreements that bring benefit to both municipality and vendor, not to mention golfers, and would not be affected by AB 1954.

AB 1954 maintains those features of 3rd party arrangements that benefit the consumers of public golf course offerings and the public agencies that provide them, while allowing those public agencies the continued ability to manage those offerings for the benefit of the communities that are in the final analysis the owners of those offerings by balancing the needs of cost recovery and long-term capital reinvestment with the public interest served by offering specialized access to local residents, juniors, seniors, students, school athletes, local clubs, civic organizations, and local charities, and in the cases of some of the state's largest urban parkland golf systems, revenues over and above cost recovery that is then dedicated to non-golf park/recreation programs that would otherwise require public funding.

We believe that AB 1954 provides the simple tool necessary for the public agencies that own roughly ¼ of California's golf stock to balance these equities at their own volition to preserve equitable access to the 220 plus golf courses that make up that ¼.

We are pleased to support AB 1954 and appreciate your leadership on this issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

Craig Kessler
Executive Director
California Alliance for Golf
3740 Cahuenga Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604

Kevin Fitzgerald
Director, Public Affairs
Southern California Golf Association
3740 Cahuenga Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604

Nikki Gatch
Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director
Southern California PGA
3333 Concours St., Bldg. 2, Ste. 2100, Ontario, CA 91764

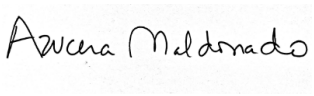
Marc Connerly
Executive Director
California Golf Course Owners Association
2235 Park Towne Cir., Fl. 2, Sacramento, CA 95825

Joe Huston
Chief Executive Officer
Northern California Golf Association
3200 Lopez Rd, Pebble Beach, CA 93953

Caitlyn Doyle, PGA
Executive Director
Northern California PGA
411 Davis St., Ste. 103, Vacaville, CA 95688

Richard Harris
President
San Francisco Public Golf Alliance
826 Stanyan St., San Francisco, CA 94117

Jeff Jensen
Field Staff, Southwest Region
Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
1421 Research Park Dr., Lawrence, KS 66049



Azucena Maldonado,
Founder
Latina Golfers Association
1832 Bouett St., Los Angeles, CA 90012