



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 194

February Session, 2006

Senate Bill No. 336

Senate, March 29, 2006

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. HANDLEY of the 4th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 17b-812 of the 2006 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective from passage*):

4 (a) The Commissioner of Social Services shall implement and
5 administer a program of rental assistance for low-income families
6 living in privately-owned rental housing. For the purposes of this
7 section, a low-income family is one whose income does not exceed fifty
8 per cent of the median family income for the area of the state in which
9 such family lives, as determined by the commissioner.

10 (b) Housing eligible for participation in the program shall comply
11 with applicable state and local health, housing, building and safety
12 codes.

13 (c) In addition to an element in which rental assistance certificates
14 are made available to qualified tenants, to be used in eligible housing
15 which such tenants are able to locate, the program may include a
16 housing support element in which rental assistance for tenants is
17 linked to participation by the property owner in other municipal, state
18 or federal housing repair, rehabilitation or financing programs. The
19 commissioner shall use rental assistance under this section so as to
20 encourage the preservation of existing housing and the revitalization
21 of neighborhoods or the creation of additional rental housing.

22 (d) The commissioner may designate a portion of the rental
23 assistance [certificates] available under the program for tenant-based
24 and project-based supportive housing units. To the extent practicable
25 rental assistance [certificates issued] for supportive housing shall
26 adhere to the requirements of the federal Housing Choice Voucher
27 Program, 42 USC 1437f(o), relative to calculating the tenant's share of
28 the rent to be paid.

29 (e) The commissioner shall administer the program under this
30 section to promote housing choice for certificate holders and
31 encourage racial and economic integration. The commissioner shall
32 establish maximum rent levels for each municipality in a manner that
33 promotes the use of the program in all municipalities. Any certificate
34 issued pursuant to this section may be used for housing in any
35 municipality in the state. The commissioner shall inform certificate
36 holders that a certificate may be used in any municipality and, to the
37 extent practicable, the commissioner shall assist certificate holders in
38 finding housing in the municipality of their choice.

39 (f) Nothing in this section shall give any person a right to continued
40 receipt of rental assistance at any time that the program is not funded.

41 (g) The commissioner shall adopt regulations in accordance with the
42 provisions of chapter 54 to carry out the purposes of this section. The
43 regulations shall establish maximum income eligibility guidelines for
44 such rental assistance and criteria for determining the amount of rental
45 assistance which shall be provided to eligible families.

| | | |
|---|---------------------|---------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>from passage</i> | 17b-812 |

HS *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

This bill gives the Department of Social Service more flexibility in the administration of the Rental Assistance Program (RAP). By removing the requirement that RAP issue only certificates, the department will be able to provide operating subsidies directly to project based housing, when available. This will reduce administrative costs associated with the issuance of certificates. As these savings are expected to be used as additional rental subsidies under the program, no net fiscal impact is expected.

The Out Years

There is no fiscal impact in the out years.

**OLR Bill Analysis
SB 336*****AN ACT CONCERNING RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill eliminates references to “certificates” from DSS’s Rental Assistance Program (RAP) supportive housing component, thus making it clear that DSS does not have to use certificates for project-based supportive housing rental assistance under RAP.

Current law allows the DSS commissioner to designate a portion of the RAP rental assistance certificates for tenant-based and project-based supportive housing units. Tenant-based rental assistance takes the form of certificates that go to individuals who secure private housing; but project-based assistance goes to property owners participating in government-sponsored housing development programs and does not require a certificate.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND***DSS RAP Program***

The state-funded RAP program helps families with incomes up to 50% of the area median income afford private rental housing. People apply through their local public housing authority (PHA). Families pay 40% of their monthly income for rent and utilities, but elderly and disabled families pay 30%.

Supportive Housing Projects

PA 05-280 (§§ 32-34) requires the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services commissioner to provide for up to 500 units of affordable, supportive housing for people with mental illness. These

units are the second phase of the Supportive Housing Initiative. The first phase was instituted in 2001 to create 650 units. The initiative is funded through mortgages, tax credits, and grants from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and the Department of Economic and Community Development; DSS RAP rent subsidies; and various state grants for support services.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16 Nay 0 (03/14/2006)