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*Testimony of Representative Gerald Fox (D) of Stamford  
Before the Human Services Committee on  
Proposed Bill 5645 An Act Concerning Income Qualification for the Municipal Option  
to Provide Real Property Relief to Certain Elderly Homeowners*

Senator Harris, Representative Villano, and members of the Human Services Committee. For the record, my name is legislative aide Alex Tsarkov and I am here on behalf of Representative Fox to testify in favor of H.B. 5645, **“AN ACT CONCERNING INCOME QUALIFICATION FOR THE MUNICIPAL OPTION TO PROVIDE REAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF TO CERTAIN ELDERLY HOMEOWNERS”**

Last year, the legislature passed H.B. 5093, an “Act Concerning Property Tax Relief For Certain Elderly Homeowners. This Act allowed towns to freeze property taxes on homes owned by people age 70 or older. In order to qualify, homeowners must meet certain income limits. Those income limits are currently \$27,700 for individuals and \$33,900 for married couples.

We all hear complaints about the unfair burdens imposed by property taxes. In addition, many of us represent municipalities that are undergoing revaluation and our constituents are facing the “sticker shock” that comes with the newly assessed values of their primary residences. Often, those who are impacted the hardest are our seniors, who are the least able to pay. Many of our seniors are forced to face the possibility of selling their homes because they simply can’t afford to meet rising property taxes. The General Assembly recognized this concern last session when it enacted H.B. 5093 and gave municipalities the local option of making the policy decision to allow those over 70 to benefit from a tax freeze.

The proposed bill before you aims to build upon the legislation passed last year and increase the potential pool of those who may be eligible for this program. It aims to increase the income limits for tax freeze eligibility under the program to \$50,000 for individuals and \$75,000 for married couples. This would give a municipality, if its local legislative body decides to do so, an additional tool by which they can provide relief to its senior residential taxpayers, many of whom have lived in their respective communities for decades.

Thank you for raising this bill and your increasing commitment at a public policy level to develop a comprehensive long term care system for our state.