

Restore Pilot to DECD Budget

**Testimony by James White before the Appropriations Committee
February 17, 2009**

Hello, my name is James White and I live at 22 Lourdes Court in Meriden, CT. I come before you this evening to strongly urge you to restore the Pilot payments to state public housing and tax abatement properties. The loss of Pilot would have a devastating effect on residents and affordable housing in this state. My concern is two –fold.

First, you're sending conflicting messages. I've heard you and the Governor say we need more affordable housing but you then turn around and punish those towns that have state housing and tax – abatement properties! Is the expectation that other towns will look at the treatment that Meriden, Seymour, Bridgeport and Hartford , just to name a few receive and be motivated to help create affordable housing in their towns/ I don't think so.

Secondly, and most important the impact on residents, some of our poorest residents in the state would be disastrous. Folks are barely surviving now and to put them in a position where they would have to further stretch a budget that already is non-existent would only force them to have to choose between food or shelter in some cases. Which would you choose for your family? In these difficult economic times why are the poorest residents of our state always the target when it comes to cutting programs? We're people not horses! We're people not historical homes! We're people, not mansions! We are honest hard working folks trying to do the best we can for ourselves and our families. Think about that when you're putting your budget together.

Thank you,

**James White, President
Public Housing Resident Network**