



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF
REALTORS® INC.

Statement on

H.B. 6284: AN ACT CONCERNING ADOPTION OF A MODEL ENERGY CODE AND GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS. ...SUPPORT

Submitted to Public Safety and Security Committee
February 3, 2009

by

Joseph Wrinn, SIOR

Good morning. My name is Joseph Wrinn. I'm a member of the Society of Industrial and Office REALTORS® and my comments represent the views of the Connecticut Association of REALTORS®.

I'm here today to ask you to support Raised House Bill 6284: Concerning Adoption of a Model Energy Code and Green Building Standards. This bill will correct a seriously flawed statute affecting building and renovation projects.

The problem stems from section 78 of Public Act 07-242, a well-intended law requiring a variety of properties to be built or renovated using the "building construction standards" of the LEED, Green Globes or an equivalent green building standard. The legislative language is set forth in extremely vague terms, failing to say if the January 1, 2009 effective date is linked to when a building permit is taken, how you measure the "costs" of the projects that trigger the new standards (i.e., how do you compute the \$ 5 million threshold - - are legal costs included? interior finishes?).

If enforcement is based on building permits taken before January 1, but where construction is still underway this year, forcing changes midstream will adversely affect development. Some businesses simply will not build or expand their facilities.

Revenues to State and Town governments will further decline when uncertainty confronts developers, architects, builders, engineers and others. REALTORS® have joined these professionals as part of the Coalition to Adopt a Unified Code. We support their proposal to amend the statute by having more workable language that gives the State Codes and Standards Committee a stronger role in implementing sustainable energy requirements.

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The Voice for Real Estate™ in Connecticut

More workable language allows experts on the Codes and Standards Committee to set detailed green buildings standards as appropriate to the State Building Code. That panel of professionals needs the latitude and authority to do their job.

In conclusion, REALTORS® favor green buildings practices that are economically feasible. Our headquarters in Washington, D.C., was the first privately owned commercial office building built with a LEED – Silver Certification. In Torrington, some of our members worked with the Home Builders to construct a sustainable, energy-efficient home. We are educating our members and consumers about the benefits of green features and a reduced carbon footprint. The bill before you will fix a situation that is counterproductive to all these efforts.

Are there any questions? Thank you.

