



HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT, INC.
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Is Our
Business*

March 2, 2009

To: Senator Eric Coleman, Co-Chairman
Representative Brendan Sharkey, Co-Chairman
Members of the Planning & Development Committee

From: Bill Ethier, CAE, Chief Executive Officer

Re: Raised Bill 6469, AAC Smart Growth and State Planning

The HBA of Connecticut is a professional trade association with almost one thousand, three hundred (1,300) member firms statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut citizens. Our members are residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to this diverse industry. We also created and administer the Connecticut Developers Council, a professional forum for the land development industry in the state.

The HBA of Connecticut supports section 1 and 3-4 of RB 6469. We oppose section 2.

Section 1, authorizing a tax incidence study, and sections 3 and 4, moving GIS mapping to UConn's CLEAR office from the Geospatial Information Systems Council (i.e., sec. 4d-90), seem to be appropriate and useful tools to help guide state and local policy makers. They are also done "within available appropriations" so should not be held up in these difficult budget times.

Section 2 authorizes a statewide build-out analysis, which makes assessments as to how a municipality (or the entire state in this case) would look if it built itself according to zoning and other land use regulations at the time of the study. While UConn's CLEAR office is the best group to conduct such a study if it is to be done, **we do not support build-out analyses because of the abuses and anti-development policies that have arisen from them.** These studies have proven to not serve as useful, objective tools in the hands of some land use commissions. **They have led to (and any statewide build out analysis will lead to) policies that limit the growth a build-out analysis suggests. Rather, the appropriate response should be to create smarter ways to accommodate future growth, not limit it.**

Build-out analyses by their nature, which look out twenty-five or more years as to what can be built, very quickly become inaccurate as soon as any land use regulation in a community changes. These inaccuracies will rise exponentially with a build-out analysis done on a statewide basis. If adopted, the study should be tied to requirements to accommodate expected growth the study suggests we might get in the smartest way possible and should be conducted only after standards are developed and vetted for properly conducting the study. Preferably, section 2 should be deleted.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Representing the Home Building, Remodeling and Land Development Industries In Connecticut
"Enhancing Our Member's Value to Their Customers and Our Industry's Value to Society"