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Co-Chairman & Members
Planning & Development Committee
Rm 2100, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: S.B. 1041, AAC the Demolition of Buildings.

Dear Senator Coleman and Committee Members:

As a resident of Manchester, CT, we have recently experienced the unnecessary demolition of one of our historic brick schools built in the early 1900's, and there are two other very historic homes that face probable demolition unless we can find more protection for these structures in the passage of the proposed bill. The three properties included the "Hollister Street/Bentley School" also formerly known as the "Centennial School," the "Olds House" at Slater Street and Tolland Turnpike and one of the "Cheney" mansions on Hartford Road. The properties were allowed to fall into disrepair and faced demolition by neglect. Each of these structures is historically significant to Manchester, the State of Connecticut and New England.

Manchester known as the "City of Village Charm" will unfortunately lose some of that charm forever if we continue to demolish our historic buildings. A group of concerned citizens successfully fought to save the "Bennet School" complex, which town leaders wanted to initially abandon. However in that case, the property's location in a Landmark District prevented a possible demolition. Numerous historic structures worthy of saving populate the town. Prudent alternative uses are often not considered before demolition.

This bill would prevent unnecessary future demolitions by allowing for building re-use while protecting our environment and preserving landfills. It provides a process for reuse or relocation or dismantling or at the very least proper recycling.

Many years ago, Manchester's North End was completely demolished and destroyed a piece of our town that can only now be seen in photographs. We are looking to the State to assist us in saving the history of our Town and State by passage of this proposed amendment to Section 29-401 of the Connecticut General Statutes (State Demolition Code). Finally, it is important that the Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Material and Waste Management versus the Department of Public Safety have responsibility for demolition and that the Department of Public Safety simply provide safety oversight of demolition.

Very Truly Yours,

Leslie Frey