



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

March 1, 2010

To: Senator Ed Meyer and Representative Richard Roy, Co-Chairs, and
members of the Environment Committee

From: Bill Ethier, CAE, Chief Executive Officer

Re: RB 5240, AAC Affordable Housing Developments in Environmentally
Regulated Areas

The HBA of Connecticut is a professional trade association with 1,100 member firms statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut citizens. Our members are residential and commercial builders, land developers, home improvement contractors, trade contractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. We estimate that our members build 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in the state.

We strongly oppose RB 5240 as a broad attack on, and weakening of, the state's affordable housing appeals act. This is not about protecting the environment – it simply cannot be as explained below. It is, pure and simple, an anti-affordable housing bill. We are disheartened this bill was raised for a public hearing.

RB 5240 is vague and open-ended in the scope of environmental considerations that could overcome the affordable housing needs of a community. It is unnecessary under current law. Any local environmental law or regulation that protects the public's health or safety already is protected from the requirements of 8-30g. In addition, the inland wetlands and watercourses act is not affected by 8-30g applications, so if wetlands or watercourses might be impacted the affordable housing applicant must apply, with the same requirements as any other housing applicant, to the local inland wetlands commission. And, state and federal environmental laws and regulations are not affected by 8-30g applications – i.e., all such requirements must be followed. All of which begs the question, why is this bill before you?

Given its broad and vague nature, RB 5240 creates a wonderful recipe for affordable housing NIMBY's to challenge virtually any application to construct affordable housing under 8-30g.

We strongly urge you to oppose RB 5240. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.