



Connecticut Business & Industry Association

**Testimony of Jesmin K. Basanti  
Staff Attorney, CBIA  
Before the Committee on Housing  
Hartford, Connecticut  
March 4, 2010**

**H.B. 5374 An Act Concerning Promoting and Sustaining Affordable  
Housing in Connecticut**

Good Afternoon Senator Gomes and Representative Green and other members of the Committee. My name is Jesmin Basanti and I am a Staff Attorney for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (hereinafter "CBIA"). CBIA represents approximately 10,000 member companies in virtually every industry. They range from large, global corporations to small, family owned businesses. The vast majority of our member companies have fewer than 50 employees.

CBIA has long acknowledged that one of the key components of a healthy Connecticut economy is housing that's affordable for workers and their families. According to the last U.S. Census, more than one-fourth of Connecticut's households are burdened by housing prices and more than one-third of every household budget is put towards housing. This means that housing is a not only a major factor in decisions people make about staying in or moving to Connecticut, it quite possibly could be the deciding factor. Our members are having a difficult time in this economy trying to keep costs down and keep workers, that they do not need housing to be a barrier to finding, attracting and keeping skilled workers. The business community agrees that we need to make housing more affordable and sustainable for our workforce.

CBIA and its members support workforce housing initiatives that assist workers at every income level to buy starter homes or pay affordable rent in Connecticut. By enabling people to buy their starter homes in Connecticut, we are ensuring a greater likelihood that they will then purchase their second and third homes in Connecticut as well. We need to grow our workforce pool and housing is a very important part of the overall economic equation.

Thank you for granting me the opportunity to testify today.