

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSING COMMITTEE
March 1, 2011

Ronald Angelo, Acting Commissioner
Department of Economic and Community Development

The Department of Economic and Community Development would like to submit comments on several bills appearing before the Housing Committee today. They are as follows:

Senate Bill 1075, An Act Concerning Public Housing Grievance Procedures

While DECD appreciates the intent behind this bill, it is simply not needed. This bill would require DECD to adopt regulations under C.G.S. 8-68f by a certain timeframe, which is already mandated in statute. Due to outstanding interpretations and conflicts these draft regulations have been delayed. DECD has redrafted these regulations and is preparing to reconvene a meeting with all interested stakeholders to finalize. Once compromise language can be agreed upon, the department will be submitting them to the Regulations Review Committee. Therefore the department believes this new mandate is unnecessary because these regulations will be finalized well prior to this legislation being enacted.

Senate Bill 1076, An Act Concerning Resident Participation in the Revitalization of Public Housing

DECD cannot support this bill in its current form. DECD understands the need for open communication and public input, especially with regard to the revitalization and redevelopment of our state and federal public housing units. As currently written this bill has the potential to prevent public housing authorities from meeting their obligations in a timely and cost effective manner, potentially usurping the statutory decision-making authority of these municipally appointed boards. Additionally, potential conflicts could arise by allowing DECD to be a mediator between housing authorities and citizens. DECD has a social and financial obligation to Connecticut taxpayers and therefore should not be placed in the middle as a neutral body.

House Bill 6052, An Act Concerning Supportive Housing

While DECD supports the intent of this bill, it is simply not needed. This bill would require that 10% of all affordable housing units DECD and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority construct per year would be designated as supportive.

Governor Malloy's proposed capital budget recommends \$30 million dollars to DECD for FY 2011-12 for supportive housing initiatives. The Governor's budget also recommends, under the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, funding for 150 new supportive housing units with \$560,000 being recommended to support the operating expenses for those units anticipated to come on-line in January 2013 and \$1,130,000 for FY 2013-14. The Department of Social Services under Governor Malloy's proposed budget recommends half year funding of RAP certificates for the new supportive housing units.

House Bill 6462, An Act Concerning the Department of Economic and Community Development

While DECD supports the intent of this bill, it is simply not needed. This bill would require DECD, annually, to submit a written report to the Housing Committee regarding housing policies throughout the state. Currently, DECD has six mandated housing reports it compiles, for both the state legislature and federal government.

They are as follows:

- State Long Range Housing Plan — Due every 5 years
- Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development — Due every 5 years
- Connecticut Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing — Due every 5 years
- Annual Performance Evaluation Report — Due annually
- DECD Annual Report — Due annually
- State Economic and Strategic Plan — Due every 5 years

These reports cover nearly everything that is proposed in HB 6462, thus making the bill unnecessary. DECD is willing to discuss these reports in more detail and evaluate ways to improve their content.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the department's comments.