

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSING COMMITTEE
March 1, 2011

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Senator Gomes, Representative Butler and members of the Housing Committee, my name is Susan Whetstone, Interim President-Executive Director of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA). On behalf of CHFA, I am providing my comments on legislation before the Housing Committee.

Senate Bill No. 1075 An Act Concerning Public Housing Grievance Procedures

S.B. 1075 clarifies the scope and requires the Department of Economic and Community Development to promptly adopt regulations under section 8-68f (Tenants' rights and grievance procedures). The Department is currently in the process of completing the regulations and anticipates submittal to the regulation review committee in the near future. CHFA recommends that the legislation is not necessary.

Senate Bill No. 1076 An Act Concerning Resident Participation in the Revitalization of Public Housing

CHFA recognizes the value of open communication and consultation between PHA residents and the broader community in regard to the major physical reconstruction of public housing and community rebuilding efforts. Soliciting input and advice from the affected residents, as well as the broader community, allows PHAs to build support for the community rebuilding effort as a whole.

Public/resident participation should not solely be defined, nor prescribed as creating and sustaining tenant organizations. Rather, public input should be made much broader, granting all residents equal opportunity to provide feedback to the public housing authority (PHA) on all matters concerning planning; implementation and monitoring of the revitalization or disposition of the project.

(over)

House Bill No. 6052 An Act Concerning Supportive Housing

Section 1 requires the Commissioner of the Department Economic and Community Development (DECD), in consultation with CHFA to establish a program requiring any housing project built or substantially rehabilitated with the use of financial assistance received from DECD or CHFA to set aside not less than ten per cent of the dwelling units for supportive housing.

Governor Malloy's proposed capitol budget recommends \$30 million dollars to DECD for FY 2011-2012 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 2013-2014. The Department of Social Services under Governor Malloy's proposed budget recommends half year funding of \$775,850 for RAP certificates for the new Supportive Housing units. For FY 2013-2014 the funding recommended is \$1,551,700 of RAP certificates.

CHFA supports the approach recommended for supportive housing initiatives under Governor Malloy's capitol budget and the rental and supports services provided in the Governor's operating budget.

House Bill No. 6467 An Act Concerning an expansion of the Connecticut Housing Financing Authority's Homeowner's Equity Recovery Opportunity Program

H.B. 6467 expands the Homeowner's Equity Recovery Opportunity (HERO) program to developers who are rehabilitating homes to be sold to owner-occupants. The financing of HERO is through Federal tax-exempt mortgage revenue bonds which in turn are provided to low- and moderate income owner-occupied homebuyers and can not be provided to owners of property with the intent to sell. The HERO program currently provides financing to vacant properties.

CHFA recommends no action on this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony to the Housing Committee.