

**Testimony of Ms. Amy Morrill before the Connecticut
Legislature's Housing Committee in Support of Senate Bill #1075**
March 1, 2011

Hello, my name is Amy Morrill. I am a public housing resident, living at Security Manor in New Britain. I am President of my tenants association and a leader of the Public Housing Resident Network, PHRN.

I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill # 1075 because I have recent first hand experience with a very poor grievance procedure.

My story is simple. I am disabled. I have severe allergies and am on strict doctor's orders to control my living environment to avoid triggering allergic reactions. My doctor wrote an order that the wall to wall carpet in my unit at Security Manor needed to be removed for my health. After many unanswered calls, letters, and e-mails, I finally submitted a grievance to the management company where I live. Ultimately the company agreed remove the carpet and put vinyl tile down on the floor.

The actual grievance is not the point of my testimony however. What I want to bring to your attention is the nature of the grievance procedure in affect at my complex for residents to use. A copy is attached to my testimony. You will see that it does not offer the grievant the right to have his/her case heard by a neutral party. It simply allows a grievant the ability to appeal a decision to the company's regional manager. This is not a just policy. In most cases, the decision made at the lower level was originally discussed with and approved by the regional manager in the first place!

If the Department of Economic and Community Development works to set a minimum standard for tenants rights and a grievance procedure, as Section 8-68f of the Connecticut General Statutes directs, I believe that I , my fellow residents at Security Manor, and all other public housing residents in Connecticut will be in a much better position than we are at present to have a fair shot at justice when we believe that our rights have been violated. That's why I support Senate Bill # 1075.

Thank you