

Testimony of Vilmarie Reyes
In Support of Mobility Security Deposit Guarantees

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am Vilmarie Reyes and I am here to testify in support of allocating 10% of the Security Deposit Guarantee budget to guarantees that give people on Section 8 and RAP access to safe neighborhoods with thriving schools.

I am originally from Puerto Rico. I came to Connecticut when I was three years old. Initially my family moved to public housing in Bridgeport, but eventually we moved to our own apartment on the east side of Bridgeport.

I have been on Section 8 since 2003. I am a domestic violence survivor. I am on Social Security Insurance due to a severe injury I received during an attack. I have been compelled to move every year for a variety of reasons. In some cases I had to move because of changing family circumstances. Two of my three daughters have grown up and gotten places of their own within the last several years so I was required by Section 8 to get smaller apartments. I have also been forced to move for other reasons, for example the sale of one of the buildings I lived in. In each case I was required to come up with the security deposit for my new apartment while the landlord still held my security deposit for the current apartment. This was very difficult to manage and each time I was only able to put together the security deposit I needed with the help of non-profit organizations and family members. Having Security Deposit Guarantee assistance would have made all my moves much less stressful.

Having a small portion of this program dedicated to mobility moves, which are moves to lower poverty areas, would also make a great difference to me. I am ready to move to an area that is calmer, safer and offers better schools than my current Bridgeport neighborhood. I would like my youngest daughter to finish high school in some place like Seymour or Naugatuck. Working with one of Connecticut's three mobility counseling agencies and with the help of a mobility Security Deposit Guarantee, I know I can make this kind of move. I hope you approve this small change to the Security Deposit Guarantee program.