

## Written Testimony of Attorney Keith K. Fuller Concerning Funding for the Connecticut Fair Housing Center

Attorney Keith K. Fuller respectfully submits this written testimony in support of the Connecticut Fair Housing Center's request for continued funding through the Department of Economic and Community Development.

I am an attorney with a principal law office in Enfield, CT. A substantial portion of my practice involves foreclosure prevention work on behalf of homeowners. Because of my experience with foreclosure-related matters, I have been honored to be appointed as Co-Chair of the Connecticut Bar Association's Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Panel, a member of the Bench-Bar Foreclosure Committee, and work as special counsel to Connecticut Fair Housing Center in connection with its foreclosure prevention work.

For the past several years, the Center has been an integral component in foreclosure prevention issues throughout the State of Connecticut. In addition to serving as a legal resource for practitioners, housing counselors, the Department of Banking, and the public on foreclosure-related matters, the Center trains and coordinates a diverse panel of attorneys and paralegals who volunteer their time and services to homeowners facing foreclosure. Because the Center is responsible for assigning cases and providing expert guidance and training to volunteers, any loss of funding is likely to end the organized pro bono efforts on behalf of homeowners in need.

I have handled numerous foreclosure cases on a pro bono basis as a member of the foreclosure prevention pro bono panel over the past several years. Because there are so many homeowners who contact the Center seeking assistance, it is not possible for it to keep up with the demand for legal representation, so reliance on pro bono attorneys is essential. I have also participated regularly in the Center's Foreclosure Prevention Clinics and seen them to be a tremendous benefit to many homeowners. There are no other programs similar to the clinics throughout the state. The loss of a homeowner's ability to get the information and attention they receive at the clinics would be devastating.

In addition to all of the above, I have been involved with the development of the Center's manual for self-represented homeowners, *Representing Yourself in Foreclosure*. The manual is an invaluable tool to assist homeowners, housing counselors, and even attorneys in the foreclosure prevention process. More than 10,000 copies of the manual have been distributed since its release, and it will continue to be a tremendous resource for thousands of people facing foreclosure. The manual has been updated as the law changes, and adequate funding will be necessary in order to keep that resource available to the people who will come to rely on it.

In conclusion, our volunteers' participation in foreclosure prevention activities and homeowners' reliance on up-to-date legal resources would not be possible without the expert assistance provided by the Center. I respectfully urge you to help Connecticut's most vulnerable homeowners by continuing the Center's state funding.

- Keith K. Fuller