



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

REPRESENTATIVE TERRIE WOOD
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Testimony

In Support of H.B. 5625, 5626, 5430 and 5501

**Housing Committee
February 14th 2013**

Dear Senator Bartolemeo, Representative Butler, Senator McKinney and Representative Miller, and members of the Housing Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of four House bills modifying CT State statute 8-30g.

The Affordable Housing and Land Use Appeals Act, state statute 8-30g, enacted in 1989 was designed to increase affordable housing in our state. Affordable housing and affordable housing initiatives are important to our state for a variety of reasons. As well intended as this law was to encourage more development of affordable housing, the benefits have not been realized. In the 23 years since the passage of 8-30g only 2,000 units of affordable housing have been built in the state, using the statute. And only 4 towns out of 169 towns that were not already compliant with the 10% required affordable housing have become compliant. That's not success by anyone's definition. Following are four bills amending 8-30g that I am in strongly support.

HB 5625 strengthens the intent of 8-30g by allowing a town that has designated Incentive and Inclusionary Housing Zones and provisions for a Housing Trust Fund to be exempt from statute 8-30g. This bill would incentivize developers, as projects would automatically be granted a permit to build within the defined building areas and defined building specifications. Towns could designate areas around access to mass transit and other town amenities. Each town would be able to decide what is best suited for affordable housing according to their local needs. This bill would help towns comply with the statute by making it easier for developers to get approval to build projects with an affordable housing component.

HB 5626 would allow Senior Affordable Housing to receive a full point toward the required 10% and not just ½ point. Quite frankly it is discrimination to not grant a full point to senior housing. In many towns in Connecticut it is not easy financially for our seniors to stay in the towns they have raised their families. When they leave, communities lose the richness of this population. This bill would encourage towns to develop more senior housing.

HB 5430 would extend the period that an affordable housing unit would be affordable under the statute description. Currently after 40 years the housing reverts to market rate. This bill proposes that the unit remain affordable in perpetuity.

HB 5501 would install penalties on deed restricted affordable units that are illegally sublet or sold at levels no longer considered affordable based on 60% of state median income.

An unintended consequence of this statute, allows developers to sidestep a community's zoning laws and propose to build wherever they choose in a given community regardless of how inappropriate the location. As you have heard and will continue to hear the financial implications for a town not currently compliant with 8-30g are challenging and very expensive. Many towns have spent an enormous amount of taxpayer dollars defending against these unscrupulous developers using the statute for their own personal financial gain.

This statute, as currently written is not successful housing policy nor is it sound economic policy. The time to amend 8-30g is now. We have offered reasonable solutions and sincerely trust that you will give them all your consideration.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terrie Wood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Terrie Wood
State Representative