

**John Fitzpatrick
1631 Chapel Street
New Haven, CT 06511
203-887-2529**

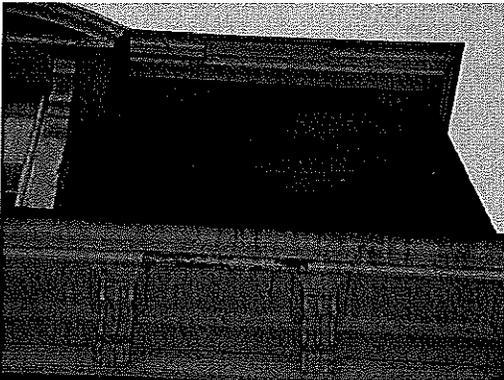
**Thursday February 27th 2014
In support of HB 5004 – AAC an Expansion of the Historic Homes Tax Credit
(Submitted testimony)**

In 2003, I bought a historic home in the West River neighborhood of New Haven. It was built around 1875, and it hadn't been very well maintained, so I had a lot of work to catch up on. The style is French Second Empire, and the most prominent feature is a wooden gutter that runs around the 200' perimeter of the house at the base of the mansards. In 2007, the gutter began leaking, and the leaks were causing damage to the interior of the house. As I spoke with contractors about repairing the gutter, many of them recommended tearing it off the house and replacing it with aluminum gutters. This seemed sacrilegious to me, as it would have ruined the appearance of the house.

I eventually found a contractor who understood the importance of the gutter to the house and was committed to restoring it to its original beauty, but the work was going to cost a lot of money. Fortunately, I had earlier become qualified for the Connecticut Historic Home Rehabilitation Tax Credit program. I submitted the gutter project, and it was approved. With this crucial assistance, I was able to afford the work to properly restore the gutter. The project would have been impossible for me otherwise.

My neighborhood has its fair share of drug dealing, prostitution, and violent crime, but it also has beautiful housing stock. Much of the housing stock has not been properly maintained, and this makes it difficult for the neighborhood to attract quality residents, which are of course the key element in improving the neighborhood. The Connecticut Historic Home Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program is a valuable tool for neighborhoods like mine that are trying to combat crime and blight and join the renaissance taking place in urban areas across the country. It provides an incentive for good citizens to buy historic homes in neighborhoods like mine and restore their beauty, thereby attracting more good citizens to the area and creating a virtuous circle.

Before



During



After

