



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
COMMISSION



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## **Testimony in support of HB 5438, An Act Concerning the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants regarding the treatment of bed bug infestations**

Greetings Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Butler and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Arlene Avery. I reside in Stafford and serve on the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission representing Tolland county.

The Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (APAAC) stands in strong support of HB 5438, an act concerning the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants regarding the treatment of bed bug infestations. This legislation will help to establish clear responsibilities and expectations to quickly and effectively remedy bed bug infestations in the safest way possible. A clause in section (b)(1) states "No landlord shall apply any pesticide or class of pesticides for the purpose of treating a bed bug infestation unless said landlord is a certified applicator." This makes clear the need to treat these infestations with established best practices in order to maximize effective treatment and to protect the health and safety of the tenants.

APAAC holds regular public forums around the state to inform residents of their legal rights in areas of concern like housing. A forum the Commission held in November at the Mark Twain branch of Hartford Public Library was attended by dozens of Karen community members who live in the area. The Karen people are an ethnic minority from Burma. Many have received political asylum here because of persecution in their native country. At this forum I heard numerous complaints from Karen community members of bed bug infestations that their landlords were not addressing. This legislation goes far to establish legal responsibilities and a time frame in which to carry them out. For these reasons, we

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urge your support and passage of this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Arlene Avery  
Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission

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