



KING COURT RESIDENT ASSOCIATION

Testimony before the Housing Committee of the Connecticut Legislature given by
Mary Hill, King Court Resident Association, Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network.

**In Support of Senate Bill No. 363
March 4, 2014**

AN ACT TRANSFERRING FUNDS DEPOSITED IN THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACCOUNT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

Good afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Butler and Housing Committee members.

My name is Mary Hill and I live at 53 King Court in East Hartford, CT. I am the President of the King Court Resident Association and also a member of the Connecticut Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network. We come before you today to voice our support for Senate Bill 363 calling for the transfer of Community Investment Account funds from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority to the Department of Housing and for a \$150,000 of these funds to provide technical assistance for resident participation and to foster the development of independent, resident-led organizations in public housing communities.

Although King Court is an older apartment complex (built in 1950's) it is our home and has been a great place to raise our families. It is our home. In 2011 we learned that the East Hartford Housing Authority was talking with Goodwin College about selling our community to the college for their use. We did not know what plans they had in store for us, our homes and *our community and there seemed to be little we could do to influence what would happen.*

In 2012 we started working with the Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network under the new law, 8-64c, Resident Participation in Revitalization. PHRN described the rights we had under this law and that we had the right to organize and develop a Resident Participation Plan with East Hartford Housing Authority that outlined our issues and what we hoped to see in a revitalized King Court. PHRN did not represent the housing authority but represented King Court residents and our interests. This was extremely important to the process!

Once we began working with PHRN assisting us, King Court residents were able to participate and have a real voice at the table where our homes and our future were being discussed. We were able to win a right of return for all residents currently living at King Court in good standing (language that we helped negotiate), all 80 units would remain affordable and we also participated in interviewing and selecting the final developer chosen for this project. These were all meaningful, significant issues for residents that we believe would not have happened without the assistance of PHRN. This is why we believe these funds are so very necessary for public housing residents.

Thank you