

**TESTIMONY BY DAISY FRANKLIN, NORWALK, CT., IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL #363**

March 4, 2014

My name is Daisy Franklin. I am the Vice President of PHRN, the Connecticut Publicly-assisted Housing Resident Network, an independent 501(c)(3) statewide organization of public and publicly-assisted housing residents. I am speaking for the organization and all of our members as I testify today in favor of Senate Bill #363.

PHRN supports Senate Bill #363 because we believe that all housing funds should be under the purview of the new Department of Housing in order to allow for the most efficient coordination of housing resources. We have been impressed with the availability and transparency of the new Department's staff and Commissioner Klein. We believe that CIA funds will be well managed at DOH.

PHRN is also in support of language within the bill that calls for \$150,000 of CIA funds to be designated for technical assistance for resident participation and the development of independent resident-led organizations in public housing communities. Thanks to the investment of more than \$300 million over 10 years, state-financed public housing will be modernized, revitalized, and in some cases completely redeveloped. And thanks to a law passed in 2011 (CGS Section 8-64c), residents of that housing must be partners in the planning and implementation of this change. The state, through its Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) and Department of Housing (DOH), is investing in the capacity of public housing authorities to undertake this important work. Now, it is time to invest in residents – to make sure that residents have the information, technical assistance and support they need to participate as full partners in the transformation of their communities. PHRN believes that the designation of \$150,000 in CIA funds for public housing resident capacity building assistance NOW is critically important for the success of the state's 10 year state-financed public housing revitalization plan. The funding will ensure that residents will have the knowledge, tools, and technical assistance needed to participate fully, actively, and collaboratively in decisions affecting their communities.

In closing, I would like to thank members of the Housing Committee for their time and attention to my testimony today.