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State of Connecticut

Committee on Planning & Development

Legislative Office Building, Room 2B

Dear Planning & Development Committee,

It has come to my knowledge that the State of Connecticut will explore studying a national Property Maintenance Code for possible adoption. I am now a retired Housing Code Official from the City of Hartford's former Department Of Licenses and Inspections. During my 20 year career I held the positions of Rodent Control Inspector, Housing Code Inspector, Community Relations Specialist and Acting Chief of Housing Code Enforcement. I am a past President of the Connecticut Association of Housing Code Enforcement Officials, Inc. a position I was proudly elected to for an unprecedented four terms.

I was fortunate to have participated in several study and development groups of a State Housing Code or Property Maintenance Code for adoption and implementation for the State of Connecticut. The news of Raised Bill # 5505 was most welcomed.

During my tenure at the City of Hartford, CT, I participated in several ground breaking programs that safeguarded the residents of Hartford. Hartford's Bureau of Housing Code Enforcement was a model for many cities and towns to aspire and emulate for many years. With the largest staff of Housing Code Enforcement Inspectors in the state for many years, the capital city was provided with an umbrella of progressive code enforcement unmatched throughout the state. The City of Stamford, New Haven and Bridgeport carries on this fine and outstanding tradition. Today, sadly Hartford wanes in Property Maintenance enforcement due to employee downsizing.

Yet, today as then there are many other cities, towns and health districts that continue to use antiquated or outdated codes in an attempt to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its residents. For many years property owners have complained that codes and enforcement regarding property maintenance from one locale to another was not uniform and difficult to follow or understand. Many years ago the State of Connecticut showed its wisdom in adoption of a statewide Fire Code and Building Code.

With an ageing housing infrastructure throughout the state, the ability to maintain and insure the longevity and viability of housing stock for years to come requires a uniform standard property maintenance code.

Connecticut is a proud progressive state with people that recognize the need to live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and keep abreast of new knowledge in the field of codes and property maintenance. It is my hope that Raised Bill #5505 begins the process to complete the code framework that began with the adoption of the Fire and Building Codes. I applaud the State of Connecticut for this process that has been sought after for many years.

Respectfully Submitted,

John C Watson Sr., HCI (retired)