



Date: March 9, 2015

To: Hon., John Fonfara, Co-Chair
Hon. Jeffrey Berger, Co-Chair
Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

From: Jude Carroll, Community Development Specialist, Connecticut Housing Coalition

Re: Opposition to SB 946: An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget

Good morning Senator Fonfara, Representative Berger, and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. My name is Jude Carroll; I am the Community Development Specialist for the Connecticut Housing Coalition. I am here to oppose the proposal in SB 946 that would reduce and then eliminate Community Investment Act funding, moving that funding to the General Fund.

CIA funding supports local municipalities along with projects within the Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Protection, Economic and Community Development, and the Department of Housing. The links among all of these projects and programs are not only related to quality of life. The Coalition understands that in tight fiscal times, some elements of our spending have to be sacrificed. I'm sure you will agree that there is a significant amount of sacrifice proposed by the Governor's budget.

CIA funding supports more than open space acquisition, agriculture viability, historic preservation, the creation of affordable housing, and municipal capital improvement projects. Between its inception and 2011, CIA supported 894 projects in 157 towns and leveraged \$122.5 million in local and state dollars. Some analysts have estimated that CIA projects have created well over 3,000 jobs since its implementation in 2006.

Affordable Housing

CIA funds affordable housing both directly by providing "gap" financing not otherwise available and by funding important programs such as mixed-use real estate technical assistance programs such as Connecticut Main Street, rapid re-housing for households that are at-risk of homelessness, housing for veterans, and housing capital planning activities. These projects support our state's economy and make our cities and towns more livable, attractive and vibrant.

One example is *Housing Connections*, a statewide program administered collaboratively by the Connecticut Housing Coalition and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). *Housing Connections* staff assist suburban and rural communities in the development and

preservation of local affordable housing. *Housing Connections* provides an array of supports to local officials and resident groups related to planning and project development. *Housing Connections* has accomplished the following since 2007:

- Provided technical assistance in the development of 939 affordable housing units (271 completed, 668 being developed);
- Obtained \$46 million in development funding;
- Provided technical assistance in all eight Connecticut counties;
- Supported the development of affordable housing for families, seniors, veterans and those with special needs; and
- Leveraged significant amounts of public and private funding that would not otherwise have been available for affordable housing across the state.

The Housing Coalition urges you to maintain the intent and funding of the Community Investment Act and support the important programs that employ Connecticut residents and create quality affordable housing across our state.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today.