

State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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Testimony

In Support of HB 6128 and SB 407

Housing Committee

February 5, 2015

Dear Senator Winfield, Rep. Butler, Sen. Hwang, Rep. Kupchick and members of the Housing Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of HB-6128 and SB-407, both intended to modify CT State statute 8-30g.

While well intended to increase affordable housing in our state when enacted in 1989, the Affordable Housing and Land Use Appeals Act, state statute 8-30g in fact is not working to achieve its intended goal. It makes it more difficult for communities to comply and offers an unfair advantage to developers who are able to circumvent local zoning and exploit the statute for personal financial gain.

Communities that have been progressive in providing affordable housing are actually penalized under the current statute because affordable housing created before 1990 is not currently included in their total affordable housing unit stock. These bills will enable towns to include affordable housing developed before 1990.

In addition, under the current legislation, senior citizens are discriminated against as Senior Affordable Housing is currently only counted as ½ point toward the required

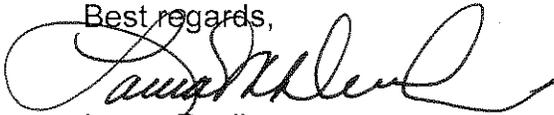
10%, not a full point. In many Connecticut communities it is not easy for seniors to stay in the towns in which they have worked, raised their families and now choose to retire. These bills will help encourage towns to develop more senior housing.

As developers target communities who have not met the threshold for affordable housing, they circumvent local zoning laws, including environmental concerns. While a portion of their units may be designated as affordable, they ultimately contribute to increasing local housing stock, making it even more challenging for communities to achieve the designated 10% threshold. When those designated units revert to market rates, the situation is worse. These bills will secure environmental safeguards and will require the units remain affordable in perpetuity.

HB-6128 and SB-407 will modify 8-30g to help communities meet the goal of increasing affordable housing across Connecticut and address the unintended consequences that have resulted from this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration on these proposed bills.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Devlin", written in a cursive style.

Laura Devlin
State Representative
134th District