

February 17, 2015

Housing Committee - Public Hearing on

Raised Bill No. 6759, An Act Concerning the Rights and Responsibilities of Landlords and Tenants regarding the Treatment of Bed Bug Infestations

Written Testimony of Cathy K. Forcier

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Housing Committee –

I'd like to thank you for trying to define roles regarding this issue.

I have been a public housing practitioner for over 25 years. My experience includes being the current President of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials more commonly known as CONN-NAHRO. I am currently the Executive Director of the Wethersfield Housing Authority.

I have two issues with this bill. One issue is the reference to security deposits that can be used to cover unpaid amounts from the tenant. In elderly/disabled housing we effectively aren't allowed to collect security deposits due to the requirement to return them at the end of one year. The other issue is that in making housing authorities responsible for the costs involved with the inspection and treatment of the bed bugs you are effectively making all the residents on the property pay to remedy this problem. One family brought in the bed bugs but all tenants will be required to pay in form of increased rents to cover the property's costs. This seems unfair when it appears clear to me, especially in duplex buildings or single family houses, who was responsible for the infestation.

I would like to see a fair bill passed. I would support the bill if the state would also allow for the retention of a security deposit for the life of the tenancy in state public housing.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy K. Forcier

February 17, 2015

Housing Committee - Public Hearing on

Raised Bill No. 888, An Act Concerning Adequate and Safe Housing for the Elderly and Younger Persons with Disabilities

Written Testimony of Cathy K. Forcier

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Housing Committee –

I commend the committee for trying to address the issues with the mixed population in state elderly housing.

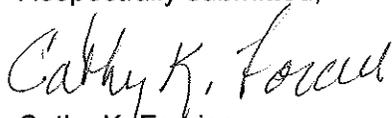
I have been a public housing practitioner for over 25 years. My experience includes being the current President of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials more commonly known as CONN-NAHRO. I am currently the Executive Director of the Wethersfield Housing Authority.

I will fully support this bill, as a first step towards resolution of the issues with the mixed populations in state elderly housing if “within available appropriations” is removed from its wording. When I first heard of a study of the issues I thought that even without the resolution I think makes sound business sense I could accept it as a good faith effort towards a resolution. However, the financial issues of the state mean that there will be no funds to actually conduct such a study.

I would like to see some real steps towards resolving this issue before the properties fail. I have a property where nearly all residents live on very small social security checks due to their not being able to work or having their work lives cut short. Due to their incomes and the lack of operating subsidy, I can't raise the rents to a level that can support this property. It is on the CHFA “Current At Risk” list. This property is negatively affecting my other two elderly/disabled properties because they have joint financial statements. Because the other two properties “are carrying” this property, they can't put aside into reserves sufficient funds to cover their own needs.

I will support this bill if a study will in fact occur within a reasonable time frame.

Respectfully submitted,


Cathy K. Forcier