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Housing Committee - Public Hearing February 3, 2015

Proposed Bill No. 6143: *AN ACT CONCERNING WAIT LISTS FOR PUBLIC HOUSING.*

Proposed Bill No. 404: *AN ACT CONCERNING THE MAINTENANCE OF WAIT LISTS FOR PUBLIC HOUSING*

Written Testimony of Scott C. Bertrand

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Housing Committee –

I have been a public housing practitioner for over 19 years. My experience includes being a Past 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 Enfield Housing Authority.

First I would like to thank Senator John Kissel and Representative David Alexander for taking on this important issue and the Housing Committee for your time and consideration. I fully support Proposed Bills No. 6143 and No. 404 which will allow waitlists to be maintained by date and time. These Bills supports Governor Malloy's reinvestment initiative for State Sponsored Housing. The date and time method is currently used for federal housing waiting lists.

The changes will help to minimize rent increases to the current residents as the shift will occur over time. The increased revenue will help to keep the developments on a sustainable path well into the future. This legislation will also greatly contribute to local agency's operational efficiency by containing unnecessary costs associated with the currently approved waitlist methods.

The present regulations are clearly written for initial lease up and not for ongoing operations. This results in agencies awkwardly trying to fit ongoing operations into the regulations resulting in an inefficient operation.

Using the methods currently available for ongoing waitlist management is problematic. The delays related to administering the process could lead to financial vacancy loss. The existing requirements have contributed to the current model greatly drifting from the original intent that these programs be self-sufficient. The unintended consequence has been that the programs serve poorest of the poor leaving the local public housing authority little to no opportunity to build capital reserves and achieve long-term sustainability without continued government subsidies.

The need to preserve The State Sponsored Housing is very real. I encourage you to support Proposed Bills No. 6143 and No. 404 Proposed Bills No. 6143 and No. 404

Respectfully submitted,

Scott C. Bertrand