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Testimony in Favor of S.B. 187 An Act Concerning Property Tax Relief

Planning & Development Committee

March 6, 2015

Good Morning Senator Osten, Representative Miller, Senator Linares, Representative Aman, and members of the committee. I am here today to testify in support of S.B. 187 An Act Concerning Property Tax Relief.

The citizens of this state pay a lot of money to live here. It has become increasingly difficult to keep a home in Connecticut because of the burden of paying property taxes that can be hard to predict and are constantly on the rise. In some cases the amount of property tax is very volatile because of the re-evaluation process or, more recently, natural disasters.

In Senate Bill 187 there is a section suggesting a phase in "on property tax increases associated with residential reconstruction after a natural disaster related only to code related improvements." After several constituents experienced major losses as a result of super storm sandy in October of 2012, we think that it is only fair that the increase in the assessed value of the improvements required by new building codes, such as having to raise a house's elevation, be phased in over several years.

Families were finding out that when having to rebuild after fire caused by the storm – the cost of replacing a home largely because of new building code provisions would significantly exceed the previous assessed value - thus, making their property tax bill skyrocket.

As you can imagine the turmoil of losing your possessions and your shelter only to realize your otherwise tax-free insurance benefit triggers a permanent increase in the local tax burden is onerous to say the least.

I support the concept of a phase in to give homeowners some relief under narrowly defined special circumstances and to make sure we are maximizing the chances of them staying in the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

Scott Frantz