



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING



Evonne M. Klein
Commissioner

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

3/2/15

Evonne Klein, Commissioner
Department of Housing

REMARKS CONCERNING THE FY 2016 – FY 2017 GOVERNOR'S BIENNIUM BUDGET

Good afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Evonne Klein and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Housing (DOH). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony before you concerning Governor Malloy's FY 2016 – FY 2017 biennial budget, as it relates to my Department. I am joined, today, by my Deputy Commissioner Nick Lundgren who will be able to offer additional insight and analysis as needed.

The Department of Housing is committed to the continued growth and development of affordable housing across the State of Connecticut. We provide crucial services and development opportunities that perpetuate Governor Malloy's vision of a Connecticut where every person has access to quality and affordable housing. I believe that the Governor's commitment to addressing these needs is demonstrated in his proposed budget for this upcoming biennium.

The programs offered by the Department of Housing are critical to the growth of the state's economy as well as serving the needs of low and moderate income individuals and families. By ensuring that our state is doing its part to provide access to shelter for all those in need, we are helping to prevent potential problems that individuals may encounter involving criminal activity, emergency hospitalization, and drug abuse just to name a few. I believe that the first step to improving any individual circumstance is ensuring that he or she has access to quality, affordable housing, which our Department is working to achieve. As a participant in the Zero: 2016 initiative, we are closer than ever to ending veteran homelessness in our state by the end of 2015 and chronic homelessness by the end of 2016. The Governor has demonstrated his commitment to this initiative by preserving the crucial services that our Department offers, even with the significant fiscal constraints that we face in this upcoming biennium.

We believe the budget proposed by the Governor will enable our Department to continue to function and perform its day-to-day operations without interruption. Since our young Department's creation in 2013 we have greatly expanded affordable housing in Connecticut. In partnership with the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) we have successfully created 2,442 affordable units, with another 2,700 units under construction and financial commitments in place to fund another 7,200 units. This progress is remarkable in the short time we have existed and would not be possible without the support of Governor Malloy and his commitment to the residents of Connecticut.

The Department of Housing supports the budget submitted by Governor Malloy. I thank you for your time and stand ready to answer any questions that your committee may have for me regarding the housing budget proposal before you today.