



CONNECTICUT COALITION TO
END HOMELESSNESS 257 Lawrence Street, Hartford CT 06106 | P (860) 721-7876 | F (860) 257-1148 | www.cceh.org

Date: March 9, 2015

To: Hon. John Fonfara, Co-Chair
Hon. Jeffrey Berger, Co-Chair
Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

From: Sarah Fox, Manager of Advocacy and Community Impact Initiatives, Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness

Re: Opposition to SB 946: An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget

Good morning Senator Fonfara, Representative Berger, and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. My name is Sarah Fox and I am the Manager of Advocacy and Community Impact Initiatives for the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness. Thank you for hearing my testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), an association of more than 75 nonprofit emergency shelters and providers of services to those facing homelessness in Connecticut. We appreciate your consideration of state support critical to ending homelessness.

I am here to oppose the proposal in SB 946 that would reduce and then eliminate Community Investment Act (CIA) funding, moving that funding to the General Fund.

CIA funds are a critical resource in our state efforts to end homelessness and to address the affordable housing needs of our lowest income neighbors. CIA funds proven approaches to expand the stock of affordable housing, both directly by providing "gap" financing not otherwise available and by funding important programs such as mixed-use real estate technical assistance programs such as Connecticut Main Street, rapid re-housing, housing for veterans, and housing capital planning activities. These projects support our state's economy and make our cities and towns more livable, attractive and vibrant. Expansion of deeply affordable housing is critical for our lowest income residents, including those who are at imminent risk of homelessness, or seeking to exit homelessness to housing.

CCEH is deeply concerned that intercepting the CIA funds into the general fund would also hinder the state's ability to support innovative solutions to end homelessness. As one example, we would cite CIA funding support for Rapid Re-Housing, a best practice to end homelessness. As you know, many of our neighbors fall into homelessness, or cannot exit homelessness, simply due to the high cost of housing in Connecticut, the sixth most expensive state for housing in the United States. CIA funds have been allocated in the past to support Rapid Re-housing, a best practice that allows providers to assist people experiencing homelessness by providing small amounts of financial assistance for first month's rent, utility deposits, and similar costs to help them secure