



# State of Connecticut

## SENATE

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Testimony in Support of SB 171 *An Act Concerning Incentives For Affordable Housing Developments*  
and SB 172 *An Act Concerning The Height Of Affordable Housing Units*

By Senator Toni Boucher

February 5, 2015

Chairman Butler, Chairman Winfield, Ranking Member Kupchick, Ranking Member Hwang, and other distinguished members of the Housing Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of SB 171 *An Act Concerning Incentives For Affordable Housing Developments* and SB 172 *An Act Concerning The Height Of Affordable Housing Units*.

The Affordable Housing Appeals Process, general statute 8-30g, made historic changes to the way that courts review municipal zoning decisions concerning affordable housing. Affordable housing developers can override municipal planning and zone laws if a town's affordable housing stock is less than ten percent. While many new affordable housing units have been developed since the statute was revised, the appeals procedure has also caused consternation in many towns, since it allows developers to override local zoning boards, and to construct new housing units without regard to the town's development plan.

SB 171 and SB 172 have been proposed to restore some measure of control to towns over the development of affordable housing units. SB 171 would create a state program offering grant funding to towns to undertake affordable housing programs. In so doing, it would incentivize towns to take the initiative in creating new affordable housing units, with greater control over when and how that development takes place.

SB 172 would place height restrictions on all affordable housing developments in municipalities under fifty-thousand. In smaller towns impact of large, dense affordable housing developments can be more conspicuous than in our cities. Indeed, the size of many of these developments is often radically at odds with the town's own unique character and may threaten the historical landscape of a community. The legislature should promote sensible changes to our affordable housing statutes that promote smart growth, and which take the needs of each individual community into consideration.

I urge the Housing Committee to support SB 171 and SB 172 and thank all the members for their time and attention.