

Public Hearing Testimony – Proposed H.B. No. 5618

An Act Concerning Community-Based Residential Facilities

February 13, 2015

Patrick F. Greene
Member, Town of Manchester Board of Directors
47 Lydall Street
Manchester, CT 06042

I would like to first thank Representative Tweedie for introducing Bill 5618 to the state legislature, and also I would like to thank Planning and Development Committee Co-Chairs, Senator Osten and Representative Miller for advancing it to a public hearing. This is a bill that highlights government's primary function, and that is to ensure safety to all citizens. The recommendations made in this bill are well thought out actions that provide clarity to our local municipalities as to what types of community-based residential facilities are in their community, and allows them to plan accordingly instead of being in the dark about what types of needs are present in their municipality. I believe this bill champions transparency and presents towns with the information it needs to provide the necessary services to the residents, inside and outside of the residential facilities.

I am fully aware that the nature of these residential facilities cover a wide spectrum. However, one type of home that was placed in our community was a home for registered sex offenders. I know that these people need to live somewhere, I am not arguing that. However, in this instance our local officials were not notified and this home was placed directly next to a school bus stop in a neighborhood with a dense population of children. In my opinion that is horrendous planning. Had the Department of Corrections notified our town we would have then been able to have an open dialogue regarding where this home would be better suited for the residents and for the occupants of the home who were publicly and vocally not welcomed by their neighbors. It was a very unfortunate situation. I truly believe that had the town been involved in the process and allowed to participate in the planning it would have made for a better situation all around.

I am here today to ask that you please support this bill and pass it in the General Assembly. The people of Manchester have spoken loudly and are imploring that there be more openness and transparency regarding who their neighbors are in these community-based residential facilities. Not only have the private citizens asked for this information, so to has our Chief of Police who has made it known that he champions the idea of advanced notice so that he can properly ensure the safety of the town's people. The more information provided to him the better he and the department can do their job.

I thank you for the opportunity to present this morning and I hope that you are able to help pass this bill. Please help our municipalities provide safe living environments for all citizens, those outside of the residential facilities and those inside of the facilities.

Sincerely,
Patrick F. Greene