



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING



Evonne M. Klein
Commissioner

WRITTEN TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGING

February 25, 2016

Evonne M. Klein, Commissioner
Department of Housing

**S.B. 167: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF EMERGENCY POWER NEEDS IN
PUBLIC HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY.**

Senator Flexer, Representative Serra and honorable members of the Aging committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding Senate Bill 167 – AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF EMERGENCY POWER NEEDS IN PUBLIC HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY.

Senate Bill 167 requires the Department of Housing (DOH), in consultation with the Department of Aging and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP), to conduct a study of the provision of emergency backup power at public housing for the elderly within the state and to report on the results of this study by January 1, 2017. While DOH agrees that protecting the health, safety and welfare of residents living in public housing for the elderly is important, our agency does not have the funding to conduct this study and this funding was not included in the Governor's budget proposal. DOH does not have the necessary staff to conduct this study and will therefore need to contract with an outside consultant to complete this study. This will result in an unbudgeted fiscal impact and, therefore, we cannot support this proposal. However, we believe there may be existing resources that can address the concerns outlined in S.B. 167 without the need for a statewide study.

DOH encourages housing authorities to work with their municipal leaders to apply for funding from the Community Development Block Grant – Small Cities (CDBG) program or the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) to secure funding for emergency power generators if there is a local need. These funding opportunities exist, and do not require an additional allocation or appropriation at this time. We also encourage municipalities to prepare and employ Disaster Planning initiatives, including working closely with local emergency management officials to prepare for power outages and identify and communicate their emergency service needs when a power outage does occur. Most of these properties have resident service coordinators whose role includes the identification of community services, including emergency services, and the provision of this information to all residents. In addition, most of these properties have on-site community rooms or facilities that have temporary heat and power in the event of an emergency. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to provide this testimony.