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Housing Committee Public Hearing, February 23, 2016

AN ACT CONCERNING APPEALS TO FAIR HOUSING PROCEDURES

Testimony of Bob De Cosmo, President of the CT Property Owners Alliance, LLC. In support of H.B. 5342

Honorable members of the Housing Committee, I appreciate this opportunity to supply testimony in support of providing property owners (respondents) with a right to request one reconsideration (appeal) to a decision from an administrative hearing/ investigation at the Commission of Human Rights and Opportunities.

The Connecticut Property Owners Alliance represents approximately 16,000 rental units and we have heard far too many complaints from property owners being unjustly accused of violating the Fair Housing Laws in Connecticut, starting with Bill and Mary Luth.

The Luth's where accused of discrimination and where investigated three times and found not having committed discrimination after all three investigations but on the third appeal by the tenants advocate, the no-finding decision was reversed without any further investigation or new facts delivered and they where found to have committed discrimination at the fourth investigation by a biased staff attorney at CHRO.

It is appalling that the complainant (tenant) can have a case brought back for investigation time after time without producing any new evidence but the respondent (property owner) has no rights to appeal if they choose to have their case heard at the administrative level and not the more expensive Judicial review in our court system.

The Fair housing Laws clearly favor the complainant in our State and extending one reconsideration request to an owner is simply making the law and investigation process a little bit more fair to the respondents.

Sincerely,

Bob DeCosmo