



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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Testimony

In Support of HB 5363 AN ACT CONCERNING THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING LAND USE APPEALS PROCEDURE

Housing Committee

March 1, 2016

Dear Senator Winfield, Rep. Butler, Sen. Hwang, Rep. Kupchick and members of the Housing Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of HB-5363, intended to modify CT State statute 8-30g.

While well intended to increase affordable housing in our state when enacted in 1989, the Affordable Housing and Land Use Appeals Act, state statute 8-30g in fact is not working to achieve its intended goal. It makes it more difficult for communities to comply and offers an unfair advantage to developers who are able to circumvent local zoning and exploit the statute for personal financial gain.

Communities that have been progressive in providing affordable housing are actually penalized under the current statute because affordable housing created before 1990 is not currently included in their total affordable housing unit stock. These bills will enable towns to include affordable housing developed before 1990.

In addition, under the current legislation, senior citizens are diminished as Senior Affordable Housing is currently only counted as ½ point toward the required 10%, not a

full point. In many Connecticut communities it is not easy for seniors to stay in the towns in which they have worked, raised their families and now choose to retire. These bills will help encourage towns to develop more senior housing.

As developers target communities who have not met the threshold for affordable housing, they circumvent local zoning laws, including environmental concerns. While a portion of their units may be designated as affordable, they ultimately contribute to increasing local housing stock, making it even more challenging for communities to achieve the designated 10% threshold. When those designated units revert to market rates, the situation is worse. This bill will secure environmental safeguards and will require the units remain affordable in perpetuity.

HB-5363 will modify 830-g to help communities meet the goal of increasing affordable housing across Connecticut and address the unintended consequences that have resulted from this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this proposed bill.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura Devlin".

Laura Devlin
State Representative
134th District