

February 22, 2016

**Housing Committee - Public Hearing on**

**Raised Bill No. 154, An Act Concerning Security Deposits**

**Raised Bill No. 153, An Act Concerning Security Deposits for Age-Restricted Public Housing.**

**Written Testimony of Cathy K. Forcier**

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Housing Committee –

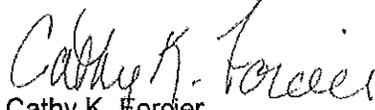
I have been a public housing practitioner for over 25 years. My experience includes being a former President of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials more commonly known as CONN-NAHRO. I am currently the Executive Director of the Wethersfield Housing Authority.

I fully support Bill No 153. There is a need to enhance the preservation of age-restricted public housing options for elderly/disabled persons on fixed incomes. One way to do so is to allow security deposits to be held until tenancy is terminated to address any damages created by the tenant. I have no issue with allowing the payment of these security deposits in installments.

I see one issue with Bill No 154. When banks were not paying interest at the rate the statutes required housing authorities to pay to tenants the solution I found was opening individual security deposit accounts in each tenant's name and in doing so the bank agreed to pay the amount required. As part of this arrangement the bank automatically sends the interest out to each tenant each year. This decreased my administrative burden.

Bill No. 154 would require the bank to send the interest to the housing authority, the housing authority to deposit it and to make entries on each tenant's account to give them a credit toward rent. This is an unnecessary administrative burden that costs in staff time at a time when we continually try to minimize costs. Currently they can sign the check over to the housing authority or use those (very minimal) funds in any way they want. I urge the housing committee to allow both methods at the housing authority's discretion.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Cathy K. Forcier