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**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 155, An Act Concerning the Allocation of
Low Income Housing Tax Credits
March 1, 2016**

Good afternoon Senator Winfield, Representative Butler and distinguished members of the Housing Committee. My name is David McGuire. I am the Legislative and Policy Director at the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT) and I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 155.

The ACLU-CT has serious concerns about the lack of housing opportunities available to people in need of subsidized and affordable housing in Connecticut. The Fair Housing Act (FHA) was enacted to prevent housing discrimination and to ensure diverse housing options for every American. For many years, the ACLU-CT has relied on civil rights laws to increase housing options for low-income and minority families outside of high poverty communities. Our organization has successfully challenged discriminatory government policies on site selection, tenant relocation, Housing Choice Voucher administration, tenant selection, and exclusionary suburban housing and zoning policies.

As members of the Housing Committee, you are all aware that multiple agencies and departments provide housing to Connecticut residents. There is no central source from which we can assess comprehensive data on who is receiving housing, what kind of housing is provided or available, where housing is available, or even who is paying for subsidized housing.

The troubling practice of continued development of low-income housing in deeply segregated, high poverty Connecticut communities is evident from what little data is available currently. This harmful and discriminatory development trend is fueled by Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs). LIHTCs are perpetuating racially and economically segregated communities by confining people to non-diverse, low opportunity communities. This system flies in the face of the FHA's guarantee of fair housing. Senate Bill 155 would encourage the development of affordable and mixed-income housing in high opportunity areas, thereby creating the more diverse communities that Connecticut sorely needs. Please support this Senate Bill 155.

Encouraging racial and economic integration is good public policy which will provide equal opportunity for more people in Connecticut. For these reasons above, we urge you to support Senate Bill 156 and Senate Bill 155. Thank you for your consideration.