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Members of the Housing Committee:

I am the Rev. Josh Pawelek, minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society: East in Manchester, and a resident of Glastonbury. It is an honor to offer this testimony in support of Raised Bill 155, "An Act Concerning the Allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits."

I am concerned that Connecticut remains mired in patterns of racial and class segregation that continue to result in poorer educational, health and employment outcomes for people of color and poor people. I support Raised Bill 155 because it strategically restructures how Connecticut uses the U.S. Treasury's Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program in order to address pervasive segregation.

In Connecticut nearly 90% of LIHTCs are used for housing developments in low opportunity areas (poor performing schools, high crime rates, high pollution rates, etc.). This imbalance is one of the drivers of pervasive racial and class-based segregation. If Raised Bill 155 were to become law, 60% of LIHTCs would be set aside for family developments in higher opportunity areas (excellent schools, low crime, less pollution, etc.). For low income families who want to move from low to high opportunity communities but find themselves unable to do so due to lack of available units in those communities, this restructuring will generate freedom of movement and choice in housing that currently doesn't exist.

Data on the positive benefits of housing desegregation are ubiquitous today. For example, last year, as part of Harvard University's "Equality of Opportunity Project," economists Raj Chetty and Nathaniel Hendren published a study of 10 million low-income families – 5 million of whom moved out of high poverty areas. The study found that the children in the families that moved had significantly better life outcomes compared to the families that stayed. The children who moved, as adults, were more likely attend excellent colleges, be in stable relationships, and earn higher incomes. In fact, the average eight-year-old in a family that moved earned \$302,000 more than a child that stayed. (Chetty and Hendren's findings were summarized in the *New York Times* on May 4th, 2015). If Raised Bill 155 becomes law, Connecticut will not only find itself on the path to similar results, but it will be taking significant steps to rectify its longstanding patterns of racial and class-based segregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Josh Pawelek