

MARCIA A. LECLERC  
MAYOR

**TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD**  
**31 School Street – Fire Headquarters**

Telephone  
(860) 291-7400  
FAX (860) 282-9706

FIRE DEPARTMENT  
JOHN H. OATES  
FIRE CHIEF

East Hartford, Connecticut 06108

February 19, 2016

Honorable Cathy Osten, Assistant President Pro-Tempore  
Honorable Phillip J. Miller, Representative of the 36<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

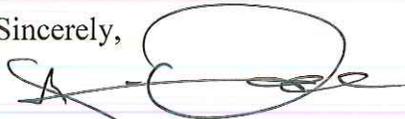
The following testimony is provided in opposition to Raised Senate Bill 86, An Act Concerning The Fire Safety Code and one, two, and three-family dwellings. Specifically, I oppose the Bill's intent to remove three-family dwellings from the requirements of the Connecticut Fire Safety Code. Three family dwellings must remain under the requirements of the Connecticut Fire Safety Code.

In the State of Connecticut, three family dwellings are typically constructed of wood and contain limited fire protection features. Of the types of multifamily dwellings found in our area, wooden three-family homes provide the greatest risk to occupants. This is due to their combustible construction, absent fire sprinkler protection, minimal fire and smoke detection, and lack of separation between dwelling units. To a degree not found in other types of construction, these circumstances place the safety of occupants in an individual dwelling unit in the hands of those in the other units. Removing the only safety net (the Code) these occupants have is dangerous, inappropriate and will lead to increased risk of injury.

Our community features a significant number of three-family dwellings. Through the diligent efforts of our local Fire Marshal's Office, they are annually inspected. Despite this diligent effort, these properties produce a higher number of fire safety code violations than other multi-family dwellings. Removing three-family homes from the requirements of the code will not stop these violations from occurring. What will stop is the diligent effort of a local fire marshal to find and correct the violation, thus dramatically increasing the risk to occupants.

I urge you to reject, on both merit and content, the Raised Bill. I appreciate the opportunity to offer this testimony and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John H. Oates  
Fire Chief  
East Hartford, CT