

February 22, 2016

**Public Safety and Security Committee - Public Hearing on**

**Raised Bill No. 150, An Act Concerning Automated Handicap Doors for Elderly Housing Complexes**

**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.

There are two items that concern me regarding this bill. The first is the definition of an elderly housing complex. This idea would make sense in a large building housing multiple people. It makes no practical sense in a complex where each tenant has his/her own front and rear door. This would mean every apartment would need a handicap door. This would be cost prohibitive.

I am also concerned about the cost to install, maintain and ultimately replace these doors.

I am very concerned about the safety and quality of life of my residents. However, state public housing operates only on the low rents it collects. There are no operating subsidies. Each new expense serves its purpose but also requires an increase in the rent collected from each of the extremely low income tenants we serve.

I can only support Raised Bill No. 150 requiring a power-assisted door at each elderly housing complex if the state of Connecticut will provide the funding to do so and if this was required in large buildings with common entrances only.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy K. Forcier