

HB-5180 an Act Concerning the Documentation of Concrete Foundation Applications

Written Testimony of David and Patricia Ignatowicz

26 Timber Lane, Willington, CT 06279

Public Hearing at Legislative Office Building – Room 2A – February 19, 2016

Our home located on 26 Timber Lane in Willington, CT was built in 1986 by Crossen Builders, Inc. of Tolland, CT. We purchased it in October of 1997 after having a complete and satisfactory inspection conducted by Countrywide Home & Property Inspection Co. of Vernon and Simsbury, CT.

About six years ago, we began to notice several small cracks around the outside foundation of the house. We originally thought that these cracks might be attributable to a “winter pour” and that they may only be cosmetic in nature. However, over the past few years they have grown progressively worse and began appearing on the interior walls of the basement. We started to suspect that something was horribly wrong.

We became aware of the gravity of this issue in July of 2015 when we saw NBC Reporter George Colli’s “Troubleshooters” story on TV. Our foundation issues identified exactly with the ones he reported. After speaking directly with Mr. Colli, we contacted Attorney Brenda A. Draghi who was familiar with similar concrete cases. We then contacted and subsequently hired, Mr. William Neal, P.E. of Residential Engineering Services, LLC to inspect our foundation and to provide us with a report so that we could submit a claim to our insurance company. As a result of filing a claim on August 4, 2015, Travelers Insurance came to our house twice (8/27/15 and 10/2/15) and the second time, brought a consultant named Leonard J. Morse-Fortier, Ph.D., P.E. of Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Structural Engineers of Waltham, MA. That day they also took three 4” diameter core samples, two from our basement walls (indoors) and one from the basement floor. These samples were taken under the direction of our insurance company and we have not been made aware of any determination or cause at this time.

Watching our foundation deteriorate is like watching a train wreck in slow motion. You cannot imagine the stress of knowing that everything we worked so hard for, our largest investment by far, is literally crumbling beneath us. You expect to replace your roof every 20 years or so and perform other required maintenance like painting, but not to replace the foundation of your house! At the very least, we continue to hope that this damage would be covered by our homeowner’s policy, but we have not been assured that is the case. This is the stuff that nightmares are made of!

We realize the complexity and magnitude of this issue. To that end, we support Proposed HB 5180 which will hopefully prevent future generations from experiencing this kind of tragedy. We also plead with you to please, please consider legislation or find a solution that will provide financial relief to those of us already devastated by something that, despite all of our due diligence, has failed to protect us.

Thank you.

David & Tish Ignatowicz