



DATE: February 13, 2019
TO: Planning & Development Committee
FROM: Ben Shaiken, Manager of Advocacy & Public Policy, The Alliance
RE: H.B. No. 6352 An Act Concerning the Zoning of Community Residences and Childcare Residential Facilities

Good afternoon Senator Cassano, Representative McCarthy Vahey, Senator Champagne, Representative Zawistowski and distinguished members of the Planning & Development Committee:

My name is Ben Shaiken, Manager of Advocacy & Public Policy at the Connecticut Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance). The Alliance is the statewide advocacy organization representing nonprofits, with a membership of more than 300 community organizations and associations. Nonprofits deliver essential services to more than half a million people each year and employ almost 14% of Connecticut's workforce.

The Alliance supports H.B. No. 6352 An Act Concerning the Zoning of Community Residences and Childcare Residential Facilities. Chapter 124 Sec. 8-3f of the Connecticut General Statutes states:

Sec. 8-3f. Establishment of community residences for persons with intellectual disability and child-care residential facilities. No community residence or child-care residential facility established pursuant to section 8-3e shall be *established within one thousand feet* of any other such community residence or child-care residential facility without the approval of the body exercising zoning powers within the municipality in which such residence is proposed to be established.

Currently, 1,000 feet is undefined in statute and therefore tends to be measured "as the crow flies," or the most direct path between two points. To make a hypothetical example, one community residence could be two miles away from another by road, but be located in another neighborhood, 900 feet directly across a lake. The bill clarifies 1,000 feet by street/public access, so that group homes can be located 1,000 feet from each other by walking or driving distance.

Ideally, the Committee should consider eliminating the 1,000 foot requirement altogether, as it only applies to community residences that serve people with certain kinds of disabilities and limits the important rights people with disabilities have to live wherever they choose—rights which are protected from local zoning by CGS Chapter 124 Sec. 8-3e, which states that "No zoning regulation shall treat [community residences] different from any single family residence."

The technical change proposed by H.B. 6352 would allow more people with disabilities to live in community integrated settings, while the providers who own and/or operate community residences for people with disabilities continue to be respectful neighbors committed to their communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.