Bill No.: SB-608
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPROVEMENT OF RENTAL UNIT SAFETY.
Vote Date: 3/7/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 2/14/2019
File No.:

Disclaimer: The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.

SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Housing Committee,
Sen. Martin M. Looney, 11th Dist.,
Sen. Gary A. Winfield, 10th Dist.,
Rep. Toni E. Walker, 93rd Dist.,
Rep. Robyn A. Porter, 94th Dist.,
Rep. Juan R. Candelaria, 95th Dist.,
Rep. Roland J. Lemar, 96th Dist.,
Rep. Alphonse Paolillo, 97th Dist.,
Rep. Michael A. DiMassa, 116th Dist.,
Rep. Patricia A. Dillon, 92nd Dist.,
Rep. Josh Elliott, 88th Dist.,
Rep. Travis Simms, 140th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would amend the Connecticut General Statutes to improve the safety of rental units by allowing building officials to issue fines for constructing rental units without a permit, increasing authority of municipalities to issue fines for noncompliance with residential
licensing programs, and establishing strict liability for lead poisoning cases and property owners that fail to meet inspection requirements.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Stated.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Conn-NAHRO: supports the underlying intent of this bill, stating concerns with the language concerning strict liability in which a landlord could be held liable for damages in situations in which lead poisoning was caused by a source of lead other than the landlord’s property.

Sean Ghio, Policy Director, Partnership for Strong Communities: supports this bill, sharing providing municipalities and affordable housing managers the tools and incentives preserve and improve the quality of housing is critical to the health and safety of tenants.

Donna Hamzy, Advocacy Manager, CT Conference of Municipalities: supports this bill, stating that this legislation would increase the authority of municipalities to issue fines for noncompliance with residential licensing programs and would establish liability for property owners and lead poisoning cases.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Adam Bonoff, Resident, Easton, Connecticut: opposes this bill, stating that laws are already in place to protect residents from lead poisoning and expresses that more legislation is unnecessary.

Bob De Cosmo, President, CT Property Owners Alliance, LLC.: opposes this bill, stating that this legislation would place more burden on rental property owners and adding strict liability for lead poisonings is unnecessary and would increase the opportunity to file lawsuits against property owners.

The following oppose SB 608, sharing concern that this legislation would impose restrictions and liability on property owners without being able to defend against consequences of actions and would potentially increase housing costs to tenants:

Paul J. Januszewski, Member, Greater Enfield Landlord Association,

John Souza, President, CT Coalition of Property Owners

The following oppose SB 608:

Craig Barletta, Resident, Bethany, Connecticut,

Ken Burkamp, Resident, Connecticut,

David Haberfield, Landlord, Connecticut,
Kevin Harris, Real Estate Agent, West Hartford, Connecticut.

Hilary Stoudt, Resident, Connecticut.

Lin Y, Resident, Woodbridge, Connecticut

Reported by: Zoë Gluck  Date: 3/14/19