



CONNECTICUT REALTORS®

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Statement on

SB 105, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RIGHT TO HOUSING, HB 5118, AN ACT REQUIRING LANDLORDS TO PROVIDE SECURITY SYSTEMS AND LIGHTING IN RENTAL PROPERTY HALLWAYS AND HB 5122, AN ACT CONSIDERING CONSIDERATION OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS OF A PROSPECTIVE TENANT

Submitted to the Housing Committee
February 18, 2020

By
Connecticut REALTORS®

Connecticut REALTORS® (CTR) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony on various bills before the Housing Committee. CTR represents over 17,000 members involved in all aspects of real estate in Connecticut. CTR works with many thousands of buyers, sellers, landlords and tenants annually. CT REALTORS®: Making the American Dream a Reality for 100 Years.

- **SB 105, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RIGHT TO HOUSING** is a proposal stating every resident of Connecticut has a right to housing. While we do believe in the concept that all people have access to housing, this proposal does not include any details about how to pay for the plan or who qualifies as a resident. CTR supports affordable housing efforts while cautioning about adopting specific legislation that does not include a clear analysis about impacts and costs on municipalities, property owners and tax payers. Our organization has been working with the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) to address homelessness. To expand housing options, CTR supports bills such as reducing student debt, establishment of first time home buyer savings account and the efforts of partner organizations such as CCEH. CTR would like to meet with the proponents of this bill and other legislation to discuss how we can work together to continue to address this important issue.
- **HB 5118, AN ACT REQUIRING LANDLORDS TO PROVIDE SECURITY SYSTEMS** is a bill requiring landlords to provide security systems and lighting in rental property hallways for the safety of tenants. CTR believes residents should be able to reside in safe and habitable homes; however CTR is in

opposition to this bill due to the cost of installing and maintaining. Additionally, many of these units have other measures in which issues such as this can be addressed by the community residing in the housing.

- **HB 5122, AN ACT CONSIDERING CONSIDERATION OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS** is legislation prohibiting housing providers from considering a prospective tenant's criminal conviction after certain time periods. CTR supports this legislation. The proposal appears to establish when criminal history cannot be considered for rentals - provides a number of years and specifically excludes certain crimes (e.g., sex offender crimes, selling drugs, fraud) from said consideration. The proposal appears consistent with the intent of certain HUD fair housing guidelines and would give confidence to landlords and other housing providers about timing of crimes and what crimes fall within a criminal history consideration prohibition. HUD has issued fair housing guidance which describes how discriminating against people with criminal records discriminates on the basis of race and gender. Therefore, this proposal should make the ability to comply with HUD guidelines clearer. In addition, CTR has been very active in addressing the opioid crisis here in Connecticut. The association believes the legislation may assist many in recovery who need housing but are burdened by drug possession convictions in their criminal history.

Thank you for consideration of our comments and CTR is available to meet for further discussion of these important topics.