

Testimony of Michele Clary-Butler, City of New Haven, Elderly Services
Supporting H.B. 6354
**AN ACT CONCERNING THE RENTERS' REBATE PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS
AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

AGING COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY
FEBRUARY 8, 2021
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING

Co-Chair Serra, Co-Chair Slap, Vice Chair Hampton, Vice Chair Maroney, Ranking Member Wilson, Ranking Member Kelly, and distinguished members of the Aging Committee, for the record my name is Michele Clary-Butler with the City of New Haven Elderly Services and I am here to offer testimony in support of H.B. 6354 **An Act Concerning The Renters' Rebate Program For Senior Citizens And Persons With Disabilities**

I support this bill, as an Elderly Service Specialist I come across many seniors who have a hard time getting in touch with their landlord for several reasons

1. Landlord lives out of state.
2. Landlord doesn't feel the need to supply a notarized letter ever year.
3. Landlord is not accessible.
4. Landlord feels intimidated because the program is funded by the State of Connecticut and feels it will affect them in the long run.
5. Landlords just doesn't want to be bothered or get involved.
6. To resolve all above landlord issues: It should be Mandatory that the applicant submit the landlord phone number only, staff should call the landlord directly to get correct information. This will eliminate fraud or notarized letters. Unless the applicant has a rent ledger. Example Applicants from Housing Developments such as Bella Vista print out rent ledgers to their tenants.
7. The OPM data base should provide the name of the Staff who completed the application.
8. If the applicant has previously applied the portal should be setup where the correct information is already entered in the system, Updates should only reflect the Social Security income, the Rent amount & Utilities.
9. Advance mailing should go out to all previous applicants stating the requirements needed to apply, stating the starting & ending date of the program. Also, information regarding the process requesting an extension and the deadline.
10. Update OPM system so the same information does not have to be entered every year.