



Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven

March 4, 2021

Dear Joint Committee on Energy and Technology,

I am writing in support of Governor's Bill 882, An Act Concerning Climate Change Mitigation and Home Energy Affordability.

As the executive director of Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven for the past 41 years, I have seen firsthand the hardships faced by many people seeking housing (whether purchase or rental)--hardships that are a result of being unable to anticipate the energy costs of maintaining their new residence. Sections 3 and 4 address this in a meaningful way.

Transparency is essential to energy affordability. Requiring twelve months of energy bills or a Home Energy Label would help to achieve that goal. This section would encourage building owners, whether residents or landlords, to make necessary energy efficiency upgrades before selling or renting a home. We have run into many obstacles as we work to bring energy efficiency to low- and moderate-income residents of our city, especially for renters. Renters must pay their home energy bills, but do not have the power to make efficiency upgrades; building owners have no incentive to make upgrades because they do not pay the energy bills. This vicious cycle results in inefficient, uncomfortable, and sometimes unsafe housing conditions. By making energy bills available, prospective renters or buyers would have full information on the (in)efficiency of a residence. It is essential that both electricity AND heating fuels are included in this provision, as is currently specified in this bill.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to submit written testimony.

Sincerely,

James A. Paley
Executive Director