



**Luke A. Bronin,**  
Mayor

# CITY OF HARTFORD

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**Shubhada Kambli,**  
Sustainability  
Coordinator

## TESTIMONY ON

### **SB 882, AN ACT CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND HOME ENERGY AFFORDABILITY**

March 4, 2021

Co-chairs Arconti and Needleman, Vice Chairs Winfield and Allie-Brennan, Ranking Members Formica and Ferraro, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for SB 882.

We strongly support sections 3 and 4 of this bill, which would improve consumer protections for every renter and homebuyer in the state. These sections, which prioritize energy data transparency, are a basic step to inform people who are in the market for a new home.

Our Office has been looking into consumer protections like this since 2019 with the help of a variety of state, regional and national organizations. One analysis provided to us, which was completed by Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships, indicates that New York state, for example, has had a utility bill transparency law in place since the 1980s.

Through our work with both a national rental efficiency standards learning group and organizations that maintain national energy performance standards, we also know that measures like this are essential for equity - particularly as it relates to renters with high energy burdens.

The proposed bill has the support of advocates across CT for good reason: According to a 2017 report by Operation Fuel, Hartford's most vulnerable households can have utility bills that are over 1/3 of their household income. Looking at data from other communities, we're, unfortunately, not alone in this. That's a crushing energy burden – that not every consumer expects when they sign a lease or mortgage.

Provisions in the bill that support renters are particularly welcome, given that the majority of Hartford's residents are tenants, not homeowners. We are also in favor of minimizing, where possible, any administrative costs associated with the requirements, and communicating energy data in a way that notes factors (such as occupancy levels, technology use) that can affect energy consumption from household to household.

Given the connections among high utility bills, utility shutoff, evictions, foreclosures and homelessness, this bill represents a very basic first step towards consumer awareness and early intervention in this cycle. Residents should be able to choose their homes based on a variety of factors, including energy efficiency.



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As pandemic-related moratoria that protect residents from utility shutoff and rental eviction may soon expire, it is critical that we take quick and immediate action to protect our residents where we can. This is just one of many steps on residential energy efficiency that we can and must take.

We urge your quick action to support this bill.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shubhada Kambli".

Shubhada Kambli  
Director of Sustainability  
Office of Sustainability