



CAFCA
Connecticut Association
for Community Action

Board of Directors

Peter DeBiasi
Access Community
Action Agency, Inc.

Dr. Monette Ferguson
Alliance for Community
Empowerment, Inc.
(formerly ABCD)

Amos Smith
Community Action Agency of
New Haven, Inc. (CAANH)

Michelle James
Community Action Agency of
Western CT, Inc. (CAAWC)

Lena Rodriguez
Community Renewal Team,
Inc. (CRT)

Marlo Greponne
Human Resources Agency of
New Britain, Inc. (HRA)

William Rybczyk
New Opportunities, Inc. (NOI)

David Morgan
TEAM, Inc.

Deborah Monahan
Thames Valley Council for
Community Action, Inc.
(TVCCA)

**April 20, 2021 Public Hearing Testimony before the
Connecticut General Assembly's
Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee**

In support of

**Senate Bill 1100: An Act Concerning the Failure to File
for Certain Grand List Exemptions**

Distinguished Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Ranking Members, and Members, my name is Deb Polun, and I am the Executive Director for the Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA), the state association that works with Connecticut's nine Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the state and federally designated antipoverty agencies serving nearly 200,000 low- and moderate-income people in all 169 cities and towns across the state.

I am writing to express our support for Sections 3 and 4 of Senate Bill 1100, *An Act Concerning the Failure to File for Certain Grand List Exemptions*.

CAFCA is a small nonprofit organization, with four full-time employees. We provide training, technical assistance, and other programming to help Connecticut's Community Action Agencies better serve low-income people across the state. We help them maximize their funding, provide better/more robust resources to people in need, connect with other agencies, advocate for their customers' needs, and plan for the future.

Until the summer of 2018, we were co-located with one of our member agencies. In July, 2018 – prior to my coming on board with the organization – CAFCA rented space at 203 Main Street, 300 Plaza Middlesex, in Middletown. This was the first time in CAFCA's 40+ year history that it had its own office space, among other independent functions.

Shortly after its move, CAFCA underwent a leadership transition, and I was hired as Executive Director in June, 2019. Unfortunately, during the move and leadership transition, CAFCA did not file appropriate paperwork

with the City of Middletown, to alert the City to our nonprofit status. We therefore accrued owed property taxes.

We are grateful for this Committee and the leadership of State Senator Matt Lesser for raising this bill, to help us rectify the situation. As a small nonprofit, we contribute to our community in many ways – but of course, our funds are stretched. We want to do everything we can to ensure that we are a good neighbor in the City of Middletown, while also meeting the needs of our member agencies – and ultimately, the 200,000 low-income people they serve each year.

In closing, I strongly urge you to support these sections of SB 1100. Thank you for raising this important bill and for your time and consideration.