



Connecticut Chapter
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
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Housing Committee
Testimony

Proposed House Bill No. 5911: **AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FUNDING AND LOW-INCOME HOUSING**

Chairmen Representative McGee and Senator Lopes, Ranking Members Senator Cicarella and Representative Polletta, and the esteemed members of the Housing Committee,

My name is Lou Trajcevski and I am submitting testimony representing the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (CONN NAHRO). CONN-NAHRO represents over 200 members, to include housing authorities, housing developers, service providers and industry organizations. Our mission is to advocate for and support public housing authorities in their efforts to provide decent, safe, and affordable housing and to preserve Connecticut's public housing stock for future generations. We seek to advance industry knowledge and raise standards through professional development and staff training and through networking opportunities. In partnership with local organizations and through our relationship as a NAHRO chapter, we are committed to advocating for policy and legislation that supports, preserves and creates public and affordable housing in Connecticut communities and nationally.

Thank you for giving our members the opportunity to comment **in opposition to** Proposed House Bill No. 5911: **AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FUNDING AND LOW-INCOME HOUSING**

This proposed bill is broad and lacking sufficient detail to enable ConnNAHRO to evaluate the impact that it would have on its members. For that reason and those below, we must **oppose** this proposed bill as currently drafted.

This bill mandates that 25% of units funded by the Department of Housing be reserved for low-income residents without defining "low-income." Is it 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) or 60% or 80%? This bill appears to be unnecessary as the Department of Housing funding programs are generally targeted for low-income households. The lack of a clear definition makes it difficult to determine the impact to ConnNAHRO's members. Therefore, we must **oppose** this bill proposal as drafted.

If the purpose of the proposed bill is to increase the availability of low-income (affordable) housing, the mechanism by which to accomplish that is to increase funding for affordable housing through the Department of Housing. It appears the governor's proposed budget targets approximately \$150 million per year in each of the next two years for Department of Housing FLEX & Housing Trust Fund funding programs. As the Department of Housing makes these funds available, it establishes income/affordability targeting goals and the emphasis is on low-income residents/households already. It would be beneficial to give Department of Housing the flexibility as it provides funding in most communities in the state.

It should also be noted that one of the more prominent programs to increase the supply of affordable housing is the Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program, administered in Connecticut by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, and this program specifically benefits low-income households. As there already exist programs that can be adapted without legislation to these ends, we must **oppose** this bill proposal as currently drafted.

On behalf of our member agencies and more importantly the residents of these properties, we request that you oppose HB No. 5911: AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FUNDING AND LOW-INCOME HOUSING for the reasons described above.

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony.

Sincerely,
Lou Trajcevski
Principal
Newcastle Housing Ventures, LLC