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City of New London

Office of the Mayor

181 State Street • New London, CT 06320 • Phone (860) 447-5201 • Fax (860) 447-

In support of raised House Bill 6418

Planning and Development Committee
February 19th, 2021

Michael Passero, Mayor of New London

Testimony in Support of H.B. 6418: An Act Concerning Abandoned and Blighted Property Receivership

Senator Cassano, Representative McCarthy Vahey, and members of the Planning and Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of H.B. 6418, An Act Concerning Abandoned and Blighted Property Receivership.

I am the Mayor of the City of New London and I write in strong support of H.B. 6418.

In 2019, we, along with other members of the Connecticut Vibrant Communities Coalition (CVCC), supported the passage of Public Act 19- 92, An Act Concerning Abandoned and Blighted Property Receivership. This legislation makes it possible for qualified entities to petition the court to become the receiver of a vacant or abandoned property, carry out necessary rehabilitation, and return it to productive use. Qualified entities include an owner of the property, a lienholder or other secured creditor, a resident or business owner within close proximity, or a nonprofit community development organization working in the neighborhood. The potential receiver must demonstrate experience in the rehabilitation of buildings and the ability to provide or obtain the necessary financing for such rehabilitation. This legislation enables municipalities to transform problem properties into productive and tax-paying uses.

While this is a vitally important first step, it is currently restricted to those communities with populations of 35,000 or greater. This threshold limits the ability of towns like New London, Stonington, Derby, Torrington and Windsor Locks, from accessing the receivership process. In fact, less than 20% of Connecticut's municipalities reach the existing threshold, despite the pressing need to address blighted properties.

On behalf of the City of New London, I ask for your support in approving H.B. 6418 that will remove the population limit for receivership of blighted properties. This step will enable New London to access the tools they need to ensure an outstanding quality of life and strong economic base.

I thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

Respectfully,

Michael E. Passero



