



**HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION
OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

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Is Our
Business*

**TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING**

**Testimony
03/08/2021**

To: Chairmen Lemar, Ranking Members Carney and Somers, and distinguished Members of the Transportation Committee

From: Jim Perras, CEO

Re: **H.B. 6570: AAC CONCERNING TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND MUNICIPAL ZONING**

The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) is a professional trade association with nearly 800 hundred business members statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut residents. Our association of small businesses is comprised of residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. We build between 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in Connecticut each year and engage in countless home remodeling projects.

Thank you, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 6570. The goal of H.B. 6570 is to spur an increase in transit-orientated development. H.B. 6570 would also create as-of-right development of certain housing types within one-half mile of a bus transit station or passenger railroad station.

Zoning reform is needed because zoning restrictions are part of the array of laws that have made it much too hard to build housing in Connecticut. There are significant economic benefits to reform. [A study from the National Association of Homebuilders \(NAHB\)](#) shows that producing 1,500 units could immediately add \$271M to people's pockets, increase tax revenues by \$40M to state and local governments, and create over 3,000 new jobs. Over the long term, passing this bill would create nearly 1,000 jobs and \$16M in state and local tax revenue on an annual basis. And this is what would happen if we produced just 1,500 units of multi-family housing. H.B. 6570 would, we hope, enable many more units of housing than that.

Zoning reform is also needed because it would enable communities with transit centers to accommodate more diverse types of housing. Our members build a wide array of housing types, from single-family housing to multifamily buildings. We mostly build single-family housing because that is what zoning codes require. But our members see a wave of demographic change, one in which single-family housing is not what everyone wants. We are already seeing increasing demand for 2-to-4 unit housing, particularly from younger residents and seniors. But unfortunately, this is the type of housing that is most difficult to build.

H.B. 6570 would make it easier to build the kind of housing that we are seeing the market demand. It would direct that development to smart places: places where infrastructure already exists, and where market demand is most likely to be high. In particular, the proposals to unlock transit-oriented development and development around main streets are a good start. Development in these types of places is inherently walkable, and market demand for walkable communities is high, according to the [Congress for the New Urbanism](#). We have said in the past that identifying pre-approved development areas, like this bill does, is an excellent way to promote smart land development plans and cluster planning. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) would also help to generate construction. Again, our state has a well-documented [housing shortage](#), and ADUs are an effective way to provide housing for young people, seniors, multigenerational families, and others who want to live in our communities, but do not have housing that meets their needs.

Thank you again, for the opportunity to submit **testimony in support of H.B. 6570**.