



**Testimony
Betsy Gara
Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Housing Committee
February 2, 2023**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) appreciates the opportunity to comment in **opposition** to **SB-909, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RIGHT TO HOUSING.**

Although the goal of the bill is laudable - to implement policies that fulfill a right to affordable housing for every state resident – we are concerned that, as drafted, it imposes vague requirements on municipalities to consider the right to housing and its components when adopting or revising policies, regulations, or grant criteria that implicate, impact, or affect the right.

Recently, municipalities have completed affordable housing plans required pursuant to Section 8-30j of the general statutes. The goal is that the affordable housing plans will help guide municipalities in assessing affordable housing needs, identifying barriers to meeting those needs, and developing recommendations for addressing challenges. SB-909 appears to duplicate these efforts in a way that may undermine the efforts that have been made to promote more affordable housing opportunities in this state.

At the same time, the state established a Commission on Connecticut's Development and Future to develop recommendations to assist the state and municipalities in meeting housing needs. The commission, which includes a broad range of stakeholders and working groups, is well-positioned to consider issues such as establishing a right to housing and how this may affect the state's efforts to promote affordable housing.

Accordingly, COST opposes SB-909, An Act Establishing a Right to Housing.