



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

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**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Public Hearing Testimony
March 13, 2024**

To: Chairpersons Rep. Kavros Degraw, Sen. Rahman, Ranking Members Rep. Zullo, Sen. Fazio and distinguished Members of the Planning & Development Committee

From: Jim Perras, CEO

Re: H.B. No. 5474 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING MUNICIPAL REPORTS CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION APPROVAL TO THE OFFICE OF RESPONSIBLE GROWTH. (Support with amendments)

The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) stands as a prominent professional trade association boasting a robust membership of nearly 800 businesses statewide, collectively employing tens of thousands of Connecticut residents. Our diverse association comprises residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and various professionals contributing to our dynamic industry. Each year, our members play a pivotal role in constructing between 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in Connecticut, in addition to engaging in countless home remodeling projects. As an integral part of the state's economic landscape, HBRA-CT is committed to promoting excellence and collaboration within our industry, ensuring the growth and vitality of Connecticut's housing sector.

The HBRA of CT strongly supports HB 5474: AN ACT REQUIRING MUNICIPAL REPORTS CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION APPROVAL TO THE OFFICE OF RESPONSIBLE GROWTH. However, the HBRA of CT recommends amending the bill to include specific data on the type of units applied for and the type of units in rejected applications (e.g., 1-unit, 2-units, 3-4 units, 5+ units). This additional information is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of housing needs and challenges at a municipal level.

Requiring municipalities to submit annual reports on residential building permit applications, is a crucial step towards fostering responsible growth. By mandating the disclosure of the number of applications, approved units, and rejected applications, the state can gain insights into the challenges developers face when attempting to meet the diverse needs of Connecticut residents. This nuanced data will enable policymakers to tailor strategies that address specific housing requirements, promoting a more diverse and responsive housing market.

Furthermore, the HBRA of CT recommends that the bill be expanded to include data on the duration it takes for an application to progress from submission to obtaining a certificate of occupancy. Collecting this information at the town level provides policymakers with valuable insights into the efficiency of local approval processes. This data is essential for streamlining bureaucratic hurdles, expediting housing projects, and identifying best practices for towns to consider to encourage housing development.

Efficient approval timelines are integral to attracting developers and investors. By demonstrating a commitment to transparency and timely decision-making, Connecticut can create an environment that encourages housing production that meets the current and future needs of Connecticut residents. The proposed amendments will not only enhance the accuracy of the reports but also contribute to informed policymaking, supporting the state's overarching goal of fostering increased housing development.

The HBRA of CT urges the committee to support HB 5474 and consider the suggested amendments, recognizing that a data-driven approach is essential for shaping effective housing policies and facilitating responsible growth.