

TESTIMONY
Carl Fortuna
First Selectman, Town of Old Saybrook
HOUSING COMMITTEE
February 27, 2026

RE: OPPOSE HB-5260 - AN ACT PROHIBITING A MUNICIPALITY FROM IMPOSING A PENALTY FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF CERTAIN ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING.

Recognizing that there are homeless people in all our communities, The Town of Old Saybrook supports efforts to increase funding for the state's homelessness prevention and response programs. Through our budgeting process, we also ensure that individuals in our communities have access to available resources from social services, soup kitchens, food pantries, and medical services.

HB-5260, however, will undermine a municipality's ability to protect the health and safety of the public visiting our parks, town greens, recreational facilities, downtowns, and other public spaces. Towns need to be able to take steps to ensure that individuals do not set up encampments or engage in other conduct that may create unsanitary or unsafe conditions. When the downtown is a small area, like it is in Old Saybrook and many other small towns, this type of conduct can be disruptive and upsetting to merchants doing business.

By prohibiting municipalities from enacting and enforcing ordinances that prohibit a homeless person's ability to occupy or sleep in a motor vehicle or sleep and protect themselves from the elements in a public place, the bill will make it difficult for municipalities to prevent encampments and other conduct that may pose certain public health and safety risks for the community.