

Housing Committee - Public Comment - Thursday, Feb 18, 2021

Catherine Giff - Fairfield CT

While advocating for housing at the local level, this is my first-time submitting testimony to the State. I regretfully am unable to commit to my availability for public comment tomorrow; however, I would like to voice my support and concerns for several bills on your agenda at that time.

I am very pleased to see several Bills focused directly on positive outcomes for people by addressing 3 primary objectives:

1. Generally, expanding the definition of what qualifies as Affordable Housing units. Specifically, by easing restrictive and onerous burdens to qualification and prohibiting onerous restrictions that inhibit the development of incremental and middle density housing (vis a vis 8-30g burdens)

a. Exempting purchased/owned homes from deed restrictions but counting them as Affordable housing units. (**HB 5683**) Ensure that pre-1990 constructed units qualify as Affordable Housing units (excluded by 8-30g)

b. While supporting measures to control rent increases (**HB 5685**), it is important to prevent any negative impacts to incremental or mid-density housing options. ie Rent Control should exempt 1-4 unit complexes if the owner resides in one of the units.

c. Linking educational and affordable housing opportunities - supporting families so they can live in the towns their children go to school in - and count that as a qualified Affordable Housing unit (**HB 5681**)

2. Increasing access to Affordable Housing units.

a. Simplify the application process for assisted housing (**HB 6432**) So few of our residents in need can navigate the process of finding housing. The application process is a more significant obstacle than a supply problem is.

b. Centralize/regionalize housing placements - and leave zoning and development to the local areas. Expand the service area for a Housing Authority's placement services, but not its building and acquisition authority. (**HB 6430**) Placing residents in housing, is the higher and best use of housing authorities. A customer focus will have more productive and efficient outcomes than a focus on development.

3. Collecting data to review the effect and measure the progress on stated goals. There's a proposal to review housing funding (**HB 6239**); consider including a review of regulatory effects, specifically 8-30g.

Proposed **S.B. No. 804** AN ACT CONCERNING INCLUSION IN CERTAIN COMMUNITIES. I can neither support nor oppose its lack of real content.