

TESTIMONY OF JAZMIN LUGO RUIZ AND WILSON RUIZ IN SUPPORT OF CONTINUED FUNDING FOR THE CONNECTICUT FAIR HOUSING CENTER

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, and Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of continued funding for the Connecticut Fair Housing Center (“the Center”). Our names are Jazmin Lugo Ruiz and Wilson Ruiz, and we are residents of Groton, CT.

We are asking you to support the Governor’s request for funding for the Center. The Center helped us when we faced discrimination based on our family size when we tried to purchase a home. In 2019, after many years of saving and careful financial management, we were approved for a mortgage and began searching for a home. Given our budget, we were looking for manufactured and mobile homes, which provide a lot of space and amenities for a lower price. We found one such home at Eastwood Park in Groton, CT, and we fell in love with it. With three bedrooms and 1500 square feet, it was far larger than our apartment and plenty large enough for our us and our eight-year-old child. The seller agreed to our offer, but the owner of the park told us and our real estate agent that the park would not allow households with more than two people.

We lost the opportunity to purchase that home, causing our family great distress and forcing us to lease an apartment that was inferior in several ways to the home we hoped to buy. We contacted the Center and learned that restrictions on household size with no legitimate reason violated state and federal law preventing discrimination against families with children. The Center helped us file a complaint with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, and through mediation, we reached an agreement with the park owner to make us whole. As a result, we were recently able to purchase a home and are now proud first-time homeowners. Thank you for supporting the Center, and please continue to help ensure that their work continues.