

*To:* CT General Assembly Planning & Development Committee

*From:* Jackie Bein/Greenwich

*Re:* SB 1024, An Act Concerning Zoning Authority, Certain Design Guidelines, Qualifications Of Certain Land Use Officials And Certain Sewage Disposal Systems

*Date:* March 15, 2021

Chairman Cassano, Chairwoman McCarthy Vahey, Vice Chairman Needleman, Vice Chairwoman Goupil, Ranking Member Senator Hwang, Ranking Member Zullo, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jackie Bein, and I am a 24-year-old lifelong resident of Connecticut. I am writing in support of SB 1024 because this bill will make Connecticut a more inclusive, affordable place to live, strengthen the state economy, and benefit the environment.

We need to increase affordability in all our communities in order to begin to undo the effects of exclusionary zoning policies that have perpetuated racial inequities across our state. Zoning reform has the power to do much more than regulate land use. This bill will create jobs, increase state and local revenues, and boost local economies, all via zoning codes that create a more diverse housing stock statewide.

Part of this bill calls for all Connecticut towns to legalize accessory dwelling units as-of-right. This is a common-sense solution that allows communities to increase their supply of naturally affordable, environmentally efficient housing while eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy. This means seniors can age-in-place near family. It also means retired teachers and nurses can downsize and stay in the communities to which they have dedicated themselves for decades. Towns should make it as easy as possible to develop this kind of housing.

This bill will also contribute to a cleaner Connecticut. New housing developments should not have to accommodate sprawling parking lots and dangerous roadways where walkability and access to transit is an afterthought. This bill will instead bring about smart growth opportunities that create more housing near transit stations and main streets, in areas where there is already

existing infrastructure, instead of burdening the environment and threatening green space with sprawl. Furthermore, this means young professionals, such as myself, can find housing in downtown areas close to transit that better suit our needs, enabling us to continue calling Connecticut home.

SB 1024 is a critical step forward for Connecticut. This bill reflects a data-driven approach that clearly outlines economic and environmental benefits, as well as a smart way to address the dire racial inequities in our state. I believe it is a win-win for everyone, and we can't afford to miss this opportunity to create a better Connecticut.

Thank you for your time.