

*To:* CT General Assembly Planning & Development Committee

*From:* Marisa Berry, New Haven

*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:

I'd like to express my strong support for SB 1024. Zoning reform is essential to creating a more equitable, stronger, and cleaner Connecticut.

I'm a resident of New Haven, and it's obvious how the Greater New Haven area has been impacted by its land use. Its history of redlining and urban renewal persist today and are perpetuated through its zoning code. The suburban towns surrounding New Haven (aside from West Haven and Hamden) are more than 90% white and almost exclusively zoned single family.<sup>1</sup> Seventy-two percent of white residents of Greater New Haven live in a neighborhood that is at least 75 percent the same race as them, compared to only seven percent of Black residents.<sup>2</sup> New Haven should be an area for incredible upward mobility and growth but instead perpetuates segregation and does not promote economic growth.

SB 1024 would accomplish several incredibly important things that would help New Haven (as well as all Connecticut towns): it would create more housing, helping reduce the cost of overall housing. It would build a more diverse housing stock that would respond to modern needs and desires. It would also protect Connecticut's natural environment, helping curb sprawl and saving farmland and forest from destruction.

I strongly urge you all to support this bill. It is critical to making Connecticut not only a fair place to live but a desirable place to live.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ctdatahaven.org/reports/ct-data-story-housing-segregation-greater-new-haven>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ctdatahaven.org/reports/ct-data-story-housing-segregation-greater-new-haven>