



Connecticut Hispanic Democratic Caucus

TESTIMONY ON SB1024

via email to pdtestimony@cga.ct.gov

By: Miguel Castro - Chairman Of the Ct Hispanic Democratic Caucus

Dear Chairman Cassano, Chairwoman McCarthy Vahey, Vice Chairman Needleman, Vice Chairwoman Goupil, Ranking Member Senator Hwang, Ranking Member Zullo, and Distinguished Members of the Connecticut General Assembly Joint Planning and Development Committee:

On behalf of the Connecticut Hispanic Democratic Caucus, I am proud to testify in favor of SB 1024, and I want to thank the committee for the time taken on reviewing these testimonies. We find it imperative to change our current land use laws because these are excluding Hispanics from accessing affordable housing, resources, and employment opportunities— leaving our state as the second-worst state for Hispanics to live in. Furthermore, the state has the second-largest homeownership rate gap between Whites and Latinos with a total of 76.1% versus 34.1% homeownership rate respectively, and we believe this bill is the first step towards closing this gap.

We believe SB 1024 will deal with the affordable housing crisis by gently increasing

density around transit stations and main streets, and by encouraging the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) because they will diversify housing stock and supply. The main street and TOD proposals also require that 10% of the units developed must be affordable and this is particularly important for Hispanic residents because 53.7% of Hispanic renters are cost-burdened in CT. ‘

As a group, we also advocate for an economically stronger state, and we cannot continue to allow 26.5% of our Hispanic state residents to live below the poverty line; nor ignore that Hispanics in CT have the second-highest unemployment rate (11.3%) in the country. We believe SB 1024 will help to boost our state economy and include our Hispanic population through expanding opportunities.

First, the proposed bill will encourage infill redevelopment which will provide new sources for job creation through building mixed-use housing near transit stations and main streets. Second, building multifamily residences near commercial areas will also encourage consuming local and will create more lively communities. Third,

ADUs can become a new source of income for low-to-middle income homeowners as well as raise property value up to 50%.

We also believe that training for our commissioners is necessary because that will help them make more informed decisions about our state and our people’s necessities. Furthermore, informed decision-making can help us reverse years of discriminatory housing practices that have deeply impacted our Hispanic Communities.

We urge you to pass this legislation because we believe that we need to create more housing in well-resourced communities to alleviate our current zoning

discriminatory practices and to deal with our housing affordability shortage.

Furthermore, in order to build a more sustainable, equitable, and economically stronger state we must find ways to advance the most vulnerable groups and SB 1024 provides inclusive common-sense reforms that will help us achieve this goal.

Miguel Castro,

Chairman Of The Ct Hispanic Democratic Caucus