

Good Day. My name is Jim Crawford and my testimony in support of SB 1024 reflects the views of the H.O.P.E Partnership . HOPE (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere) was created in 2004 as a non-profit organization dedicated to developing affordable/workplace housing options. It focuses on lower Middlesex County, Old Lyme and surrounding Shoreline communities.

A local faith community had discovered that a large number of residents resided in short term housing that severely strained already stressed household budgets and perpetuated an unhealthy absence of sustainability for families. Other faith groups, community service organizations and town leaders were brought into the conversation in an effort to build a coalition addressing the need for affordable housing. HOPE was born and for the last 17 years has been recognized in the area for its' innovative housing solutions for low-income people who suffer disproportionately from the housing crisis.

The organization's volunteers have researched and analyzed the myriad obstacles that have hampered the development of affordable housing options for people in our part of the state. Many citizens of Connecticut see our part of the state as a beautiful vacation area that is attractive to large numbers of tourists. Hiding in plain sight,however, is our year 'round population that sustains the tourist economy. These seasonal low wage earners have livelihoods hyper sensitive to the vagaries of the five months when the local economies roar. These are the people that HOPE exists to assist.

SB 1024 has excellent solutions to help address the barriers that have historically blocked the development of affordable housing in our area. Zoning laws that prohibit accessory apartments, multi-family dwellings,and lot size restrictions abound in our region. Added to these is the reality that wastewater systems in our communities are almost universally confined to individual property septic systems. Without innovative solutions and cooperative efforts to address these issues, a supply of available affordable housing options is essentially impossible to achieve.

HOPE is particularly pleased that SB 1024 includes references to the "Live Work Unit" concept that recognizes housing can be incorporated with commercial/industrial development . This truly meets the definition of workforce housing. In addition, the term "Middle Housing" provides a guideline that recognizes the need to address the significant challenges when duplexes, triplexes,cottage clusters and townhouses are not allowed to be options.

Significantly, the provisions addressing the need to be sensitive to the environmental fragility of Long Island Sound when new construction is proposed resonates with our membership given our proximity to this natural treasure. Safeguarding our quality of life need not be compromised when addressing the affordable housing crisis in our midst.

The volunteers with the HOPE Partnership are committed to equal opportunities for all in search of affordable housing options. . We recognize that historical barriers need to be

analyzed, modified or removed when appropriate and that a fresh, energized campaign to address this crisis needs to commence going forth. The Hope Partnership believes that SB 1024 is an excellent step in a positive direction to launch the campaign.