



Fostering The Community, Inc
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TESTIMONY ON SB 1024

AN ACT CONCERNING ZONING AUTHORITY, CERTAIN DESIGN
GUIDELINES, QUALIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN LAND USE OFFICIALS
AND CERTAIN SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS

via email to pctestimony@cga.ct.gov

By: *Jennifer Fell, CEO*
Fostering the Community, Inc
March 15, 2021

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:

I am writing on behalf of Fostering the Community to testify in strong support of Senate Bill 1024. Thank you for allowing me to participate in the important discussion of this bill.

Fostering the Community is a non-profit organization that drives legislation, policy, and practices that promote the current well-being and future security of children in the Connecticut foster care system. We also educate our citizens in creating safe homes for children while we recruit new foster parents.

We believe that our state requires a zoning reform because our current housing market is very threatening for our youth and our families attempting to create stable homes so that they may reunify with their children.

- Research shows that it is even more threatening to our [foster youth who struggle more in the transition for independent living](#) showing higher rates of homelessness, less housing stability, and more reliance on public housing assistance.
- Furthermore, access to stable housing is key for children and youth development including academic success.
 - Children of low-income families are particularly affected by residential mobility which leads to them being [behind in academic progress](#).
- Homeless children account for the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population. They represent [38% of America's homeless population](#).

We believe that this bill will help alleviate the housing market burden for our youth and families looking to create stable housing for reunification in the following ways:

Transit-Oriented Development & Main Streets

This bill proposes to create density around transit stations and main streets which:

- Increases housing availability in high opportunity areas that is likely to be more affordable to more people.
- Promotes residential development in high opportunity neighborhoods and areas with easy access to jobs and services.
- Encourages the use of public transit and other environmentally conscious modes of transportation which increases the health of the residents by lowering carbon footprints.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

We are very supportive of making ADUs allowed as of right in the state because:

- [Diversifies housing stock](#) that caters to different groups of people particularly the youth, seniors, and multigenerational families.
- Increases affordability through free-market housing solutions without transforming existing neighborhoods.
- Generates rental income that is particularly impactful for [low and middle-income homeowners](#)

Parents and youth in Connecticut are struggling to find the stability, safety, and accessibility that they need to work and live and thrive. I strongly believe that SB 1024 will help give them these opportunities that our previous infrastructure did not offer.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.



Jennifer Fell
President and CEO of Fostering The Community, Inc