

*To:* CT General Assembly Planning & Development Committee

*From:* NAME/TOWN OF RESIDENCE

*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 Aria Harris, I am a student in New Haven, CT, and I am writing in support of SB 1024 because zoning reform will positively impact my community and our state. Zoning laws affect nearly every aspect of public life and especially impact efforts for racial equity, affordable housing, the environment, and the local economy. Reforming the outdated zoning laws in Connecticut is the first step towards a more equitable future for all.

As a current student, I am anxious about my housing prospects in the future. With the housing market becoming increasingly competitive and inaccessible, it is more than likely that I will be unable to find affordable housing after graduation. The zoning reform proposed in SB 1024 will expand housing options so that I may be able to live where I choose, rather than be limited by where I can afford. In doing so, this bill will create greater equality and opportunity for all. Furthermore, I support SB 1024's proposal to make towns and cities more accessible as a commuter. In the future, I hope to be able to travel exclusively by foot, bike, or public transit. Consolidating housing and limiting sprawl while expanding access to transportation will support active commuters of every age.

In addition, I support this bill because of the positive impacts that it will have on today's fight for environmental justice. Encouraging smart growth by concentrating development in places with existing infrastructure and housing will protect farmland and forests. The transit-oriented development proposed in SB will reduce the number of vehicles on the road and curb transportation emissions. Climate change is the most perilous issue facing my generation and so we all must do everything in our power to pass legislation that will support climate solutions.

Thank you for considering my testimony and I ask that you join me in supporting SB 1024 to build a more equitable future for all in Connecticut.