

To: Connecticut General Assembly Planning and Development Committee
From: Rodney Klukas
RE: Testimony on 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 Connecticut General Assembly Joint Planning and Development Committee:

I am in full support of SB 1024 because of how restrictive our state's zoning laws currently are, especially in terms of future housing development. Having life-long experience in the development industry, I have seen how Connecticut's stifling land use policy has stopped towns' growth, as well as keeping them from reaching their full economic and infrastructural potential.

The passage of SB 1024 will attract developers to build more diverse housing types, which fuels Connecticut's economy and provides prospective state residents with a plethora of housing options. Another part of the bill that I would like to commend is the Transit-Oriented Development. Due to the lack of transportation infrastructure, I am dependent on my car to travel to other parts of the state or even go shopping in my own community. Investing in TOD will bring more economic activity to my town's small businesses, which, especially with COVID-19, are struggling to stay afloat.

SB 1024 will also help limit our environmental emissions. According to the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, nearly 40% of all of our state's carbon emissions arise from transportation (namely automobiles). In the State of the Air 2020 Report, Fairfield County has some of the highest ozone levels in the eastern United States. There is obvious correlation between Connecticut's lack of TOD and high air pollution rates. SB 1024 will help ameliorate these high carbon emissions while also increasing affordable housing around transit areas, which benefits both developers and Connecticut residents who are struggling to find affordable housing. More people living in these transit areas will provide business and foot-traffic for mom-and-pop shops.

I encourage the Committee to pass SB 1024 because it helps all sectors of Connecticut state—its economy, access to transportation, affordable housing, and inclusivity and diversity within our neighborhoods. SB 1024 is the change that our state needs after years of economic stagnation and exclusivity that hinders all of our communities.

Thank you for reading my testimony in favor of SB 1024.
Sincerely,
Rodney Klukas
Avon, CT