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**Planning and Development Committee  
Public Hearing  
Monday, March 15, 2021**

**Support**

- **S.B. No. 1024 'AN ACT CONCERNING ZONING AUTHORITY, CERTAIN DESIGN GUIDELINES, QUALIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN LAND USE OFFICIALS AND CERTAIN SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS'**
- **H.B. No. 6107 'AN ACT CONCERNING THE REORGANIZATION OF THE ZONING ENABLING ACT AND THE PROMOTION OF MUNICIPAL COMPLIANCE'**
- **H.B. No. 6613 'AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESSORY APARTMENTS, MIDDLE HOUSING AND MULTIFAMILY HOUSING'**

**Support with Amendments**

- **S.B. No. 1026 'AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING FOR CERTAIN PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIALS'**

Dear Senator Cassano, Representative McCarthy Vahey, Senator Hwang, Representative Zullo, and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee, thank you for hearing my testimony today on **S.B. 1024, H.B. No. 6107, H.B. No. 6613, and S.B. No. 1026** to support efforts to increase housing options, and promote economic diversity in housing.

I am a member of the statewide HOME Connecticut Campaign to expand housing opportunity in Connecticut and I am Executive Director of the Westport Housing Authority. Alongside many other of my colleagues, we know that safe, affordable housing is critical for our state's residents and the state's economy. When our state's residents have affordable and stable housing, their economic and health outcomes improve.

**I respectfully request that the committee:**

- **Support S.B. No. 1024 An Act Concerning Zoning Authority, Certain Design Guidelines, Qualifications of Certain Land Use Officials and Certain Sewage Disposal Systems.** The pandemic has exacerbated the affordable housing crisis in the State, and particularly in Fairfield County. As we continue through the pandemic, its effects will be experienced by families for years. It's imperative that each town act now to reform existing land use regulations, and expand utility infrastructure to support more affordable housing in transit areas. S.B. 1024 does not take away local control of land use decisions, the proposed bill gives the education, training, and tools needed to assist elected and appointed officials in addressing the shortage in housing options in their community.



- **Support H.B. No. 6107 An Act Concerning the Reorganization of the Zoning Enabling Act and the Promotion of Municipal Compliance.** H.B. 6107 promotes the state’s policy goal of encouraging all municipalities to plan for multi-family housing and housing affordable to low- and moderate-income families. Further, it requires zoning regulations affirmatively further the purposes of the federal Fair Housing Act and removes the highly subjective “character of the district” consideration, which has been used as the basis of discriminatory zoning decisions. All reasonable aspects of “character” are fully covered by other sections of § 8-2, including considerations of historic preservation, environmental impact, density, scale, location, and the suitability of uses.
- **Support H.B. 6613 An Act Concerning Accessory Apartments, Middle Housing and Multifamily Housing** Permitting ADUs and small multifamily housing more broadly and without undue restrictions will promote the incremental growth of our lower cost housing supply, bringing new residents to town centers and transit station areas while continuing to allow municipalities to control the physical and site characteristics of their community through their zoning ordinance, the health code, building code, and other regulations.
- **Support with amendments S.B. 1026 An Act Concerning Training for Certain Planning and Zoning Officials.** S. B. 1026 allows municipalities to require members of planning and zoning commissions to complete four (4) hours of training annually, at least two of which must include training on housing alternatives or affordable housing. *I suggest this bill be amended to increase the minimum hours of training to five (5) hours annually and require all members of planning and zoning commissions in Connecticut meet this minimum standard. I also support the bill be amended to direct the state to develop such a training curriculum, to be administered in-person and online.*

I have had the pleasure to serve the residents of Westport Housing Authority for fifteen years, and have opened and closed our wait lists several times during my career. I can tell you the need for more affordable housing in Fairfield County has never been more crucial. The time to act is now. Thank you for your continued leadership, and support of our mission.

Very truly yours,



**Carol J. Martin**  
**Executive Director**

Cc: Board of Commissioners, Westport Housing Authority