

Dear Planning & Development Committee,

The following is my written testimony in opposition to SB 1024

My name is Adam Nachbauer, I live in Stamford and I work as a Junior Architect. As a recent college graduate I understand first hand the need for affordable housing. As a Junior Architect I have worked directly with the building dept.'s of countless municipalities across western CT. My understanding of zoning is both academic as well as practical.

Costly programs, regulations, and zoning fees such as those being proposed today are burdensome to developers thus despite market demand for affordable housing the only way developers can turn a profit is via luxury apartments with greater profit margins. Unfortunately, the progressive bureaucrat lacks the self awareness to realize that they have caused this problem and instead choose to double down as exemplified by this bill.

The infrastructure in the areas targeted by this bill were not designed to handle high density living. Roads will need to be widened, plumbing and electrical services upgraded to meet demand. Lack of jobs and food in immediate areas will be of great inconvenience to people who do not own cars so public transportation will need to be expanded. With existing infrastructure in CT is already neglected there is no reason to suspect that this will go according to plan, resulting in sub optimal conditions.

Urban sprawl has been a problem in the US since the 1950's with most urban planning authorities citing it as being unsustainable, unsightly, and inconvenient. The alternative we should strive for is the walking city, which more resembles cities you would find in Europe. In European cities, residents generally have walking access to schools, shops, jobs, and cultural/activity centers. SB 1024 will make this goal unachievable by further incentivizing motor vehicle reliant urban sprawl. We should instead invest in our urban centers and restructure them using the European walking city as a model.

Most property in zones targeted by this bill are owned by the people who live there. This gives residents a sense of permanence and duty their community and neighbors. High density apartments on the other hand are generally owned by corporate entities. In effect this bill will siphon actual land ownership away from community members, and into the hands of corporate entities who can steamroll community members with corporate cash. The result will be the degradation of the social fabric of the community.

In conclusion, this bill does not address the underlying cause of housing unaffordability or the needed infrastructure upgrades. This bill will exacerbate environmentally unsustainable urban sprawl. This bill will destroy the social fabrics of decades old communities. And finally, with all these flaws, I must call into question the idea of this committee conducting and requiring training courses. I fear that much like this bill, the content of these courses will be ideological rather than practical.

Adam Nachbauer