

To: CT General Assembly Planning & Development Committee

From: Zachary Oberholtzer/Stamford CT

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:

I am writing in support of SB 1024. Connecticut suffers from high rental prices, poor transit, poor walkability, high traffic, and urban sprawl which eats into spaces that could be reserved for wildlife/public use. Additionally, urban sprawl and the car centric design of our community all significantly contribute to climate change. Allowing for increased housing density will permit our communities to more efficiently use space which practically means dense areas can be designed for walkability rather than car transport, more space can be set aside for public use rather than housing (because we are using existing housing space more efficiently), mass transit becomes more efficient as single stations can service more riders. Additionally, increasing the housing stock through up-zoning and streamlining building permitting will help manage the ever-increasing rental prices. I should note a critical part of social justice and community solidarity requires up-zoning rich neighborhoods as well as poor. Too often poor residents are forced out by wealthy residents, unable to find housing in the extremely limited rich neighborhoods, overflowing into the adjacent neighborhoods and driving up rents. Finally, parking minimums decrease density by reserving space for cars that could be used to house people. It might be controversial, but I think people it is time we designed our communities for people rather than cars.

In summary I strongly support the reforms to Connecticut land use proposed in SB 1024 and wish to see its passage.

Sincerely,

Zach Oberholtzer