

To: CT General Assembly Planning & Development Committee

From: Douglas Renfield-Miller, Redding, 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 12, 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 live in Redding, a beautiful, bucolic town with widely spaced homes and lots of preserved public lands. We have excellent schools, a thriving community center and competent local government. What we do not have is diversity. Redding comprises almost entirely single-family homes on lots of 2 acres or more, occupied by white residents such as I. Like many towns, Redding is also aging; school enrolment has been declining. For reasons of social justice and equity, and our own survival things need to change. In Redding and across Connecticut, we need to build more diverse and dynamic communities. SB 1024 is critical to this process.

Zoning increasingly determines destiny. It determines how we design and build our communities and who can live in them. With smart zoning reform, we can boost Connecticut's economy, make our communities more equitable, lower housing costs and protect our environment. Zoning reform is essential to a more equitable, more welcoming, more dynamic and cleaner Connecticut.

Redding is already moving in the right direction with its recent takeover of the Wire Mill property and potential development in Georgetown. However, more needs to be done and efforts need to be institutionalized statewide. No town should be exempt.

I urge you to support the zoning reforms in SB 1024. It's not only the smart thing to do, but also the right and just thing to do.

Sincerely,

Douglas Renfield-Miller