

March 26, 2021

Members of the Planning & Development Committee
Connecticut General Assembly

Re: Senate Bill No. 1024 – An Act Concerning Zoning Authority, Certain Design Guidelines,
Qualifications of Certain Land Use Officials and Certain Sewage Disposal Systems

My name is Vicki Tesoro and I am the First Selectman of Trumbull.

Trumbull is a community of 36,000 in Fairfield County bordering Bridgeport, Stratford, Shelton, Easton, Fairfield, and Monroe. As a traditional bedroom community that is 98% developed, 90% of Trumbull is residential property and of that, approximately 90% are single-family three to four bedroom homes. Over the past four years, we have made great strides in tackling housing diversity in Trumbull, but we have more to do. The changes we have made have not come easily and have come with significant criticism from some in town. Despite that criticism, I believe it is essential to create more affordable and senior housing in Connecticut. At the same time, I believe that each community and its residents must have a say in how to achieve this important goal. Dictating a policy and a type of development from Hartford is sure to end badly at the local level and is, in my opinion, unlikely to advance the very goal that the policy intends.

I want to share with you what Trumbull is doing to add diversity to its housing stock and to advance affordability:

- Trumbull has one of the most progressive accessory apartment policies in Connecticut. All approved units are deed restricted as affordable for forty years.
- Last year, Trumbull changed accessory apartment deed restrictions from 80% of area median income to 60% of area median income in order to create a deeper level of affordability.
- Trumbull conducted a complete census of its affordable housing in 2019 and added 120 additional deed restricted units to our inventory.
- In 2018, Trumbull completed a housing diversity study to advance the type of housing available in town and to advance affordability.
- Between 2017–2020 the Trumbull Planning and Zoning Commission approved three multi-family apartment developments representing 661 units. Trumbull had not built rental housing for 25 years.

These important steps are underpinnings to a more formal affordable housing strategy that we will be developing as a part of the required affordable housing plan in 2022. These steps are in line with our local Plan of Conservation and Development and have created opportunity for people to stay in Trumbull and come to Trumbull.

I emphatically believe that Home Rule must be respected so communities can develop their own plans in accordance with local conditions. I further implore you to have much more extensive dialogue with local leaders before approving any one size fits all, top-down policy. For these reasons, I am opposed to Senate Bill 1024.

Vicki A. Tesoro
First Selectman
Town of Trumbull