

Public testimony for S.B. 1024.

Dear Sen. Cassano, and Rep. McCarthy Vahey, and members of the Planning and Development Committee.

I'm writing concerning bill S.B. 1024, specifically its provision to increase density around transit and middle housing. I fully support these provisions. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

We are in the early stages of catastrophic climate change. We see rising temperatures, storms of enormous power, unusual weather generally, drying conditions that fuel fires, rising seas, and other climate-related problems.

Over the coming decades, climate changes will prompt a northern migration. It may well be the most significant driver of growth in our state in the next 50 years. The pandemic-related relocations into Connecticut is giving us a preview of how the state will change.

Climate change is also a Connecticut problem. Our average temperature has increased 2.8 degrees Fahrenheit from 1970-2018. (See Climate Central April 2019, Earth Day report).

Along with Rhode Island, Connecticut is one of the fastest warming states because of the influences of the coastal waters.

But even in this climate change era, Connecticut and New England generally will be in an excellent position to grow the population as Americans relocate from more distressed parts of the nation.

Connecticut needs to prepare for this future and increase housing density near transit.

The state relies heavily on oil heat for our homes. Oil heat will become unaffordable because of a likely carbon tax, and this will be a lot of pressure on single-family home affordability.

Oil heat will not be sustainable long-term, which will be a significant problem for the state's families. People will need to spend thousands upgrading heating systems, add solar and retrofit their homes for green energy. Higher densities can help address this.

Property taxes are high, and this is prompting some people to move out of their family homes. Allowing people to create rental accessory apartments will help people stay in their homes, expand affordable housing, as well as pay for energy upgrades.

Connecticut needs to develop into a green state with new energy sources and higher-density housing. Although affordability and decreasing segregation drives much of this discussion around this bill, we can't ignore the climate change impacts.

Climate change will radically shape our world and prompt us to move to higher densities, less restrictive zoning, which will also help affordability goals.

Thank you,

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