

**FIRST SELECTWOMAN**  
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March 14, 2021

Re: SB 1024-Opposition

Honorable Senate Chairman Cassano, House Chairwoman McCarthy-Vahey, Ranking Senator Hwang, and Ranking House member Zullo

Thank you for the opportunity to share my comments in opposition to SB1024. The bill mandates a one-size fits all, top-down approach which proponents have represented will increase housing and ethnic diversity in Connecticut's suburban and rural communities. The approach reflects a lack of understanding and recognition of how many of these same communities, including the Town of Wilton, have proactively and successfully increased the housing and ethnic diversity of our communities. In addition, the mandated top-down approach doesn't facilitate an increase in affordable housing, certainly a critical component of any community's housing diversity.

Per the U.S Census, in 2000 the Town of Wilton's non-white population was 5%. Per the most recent 2019 U.S. Census data, Wilton's non-white population was 15%. During that period, while Wilton's non-white population tripled, Wilton's population grew by only 4%.

During that same 19-year period, Wilton's housing diversity grew through multi-family developments, including apartments buildings and owner-occupied town homes. Most of this development had an affordable component as contained in Wilton's zoning regulations.

The Town of Wilton was ahead of its time in requiring affordable units and proactively facilitating affordable developments. More than 25 years ago, Wilton residents spearheaded the Town's first sponsorship of the construction of permanent deed restricted affordable single-family homes on land provided by the State of Connecticut. In 2016, construction was completed on our two most recent Town facilitated projects. Both are within walking distance of the Wilton Center train station, one 100% affordable and the other 30% affordable.

In the case of the former, Wilton residents again spearheaded the project, providing donations of more than \$1.5 million as seed money. The land is owned by the Town of Wilton. The second project was built on land sold by the Town of Wilton specifically to allow for the affordable units.

Wilton's recently completed Plan of Conservation and Development prioritizes increased housing diversity and affordability. Following the approval of the Plan, a Housing Committee was formed. We are very concerned that SB 1024 could undermine our ongoing efforts.

Local residents working with their local government know best how to achieve the goals of diversity and affordability within their community.

Thank you for your time consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lynne A Vanderslice".

Lynne A Vanderslice  
First Selectwoman  
Town of Wilton