

I appreciate that these bills are intended to increase the supply of affordable housing. This is a goal that the region shares. The region created 48% of new affordable housing units in Connecticut, despite accounting for 16% of the state's population. The region's adoption of innovative and effective strategies such as transit-oriented development and inclusionary zoning, which requires multifamily housing to include affordable units as a condition of approval, have played a key role in this success. I share the goals of SB 1024 and HB 6613 but disagrees with the assumptions in them that municipalities will not build affordable housing on their own, that state intervention is needed, and that public involvement and equity are in dichotomy. The region's experience, where local governments voluntarily adopted regulations to promote affordable housing production, through a process that included hearings on regulations and proposals, without external intervention, demonstrates these assumptions to be false. Given false premises, SB 1024 and HB 6613 are likely to prove counterproductive, setting back equity rather than advancing it. These bills would compel municipalities to allow denser housing around transit stations and commercial corridors – places where a car is not necessary and that are ideal for households that struggle with the cost of owning one – by right, at market rate, without any affordability requirements. This would pull the rug out from under the region's successful inclusionary zoning programs. (Given lower profits on affordable units, it is doubtful whether any developers would opt into inclusionary zoning if they can build without it.)

Please let local communities create affordable housing. Also appreciate that there are many affordable options that are not deemed as such and these numbers should be tracked in addition to the officially deemed low income housing.

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