

**To: CT General Assembly Planning & Development Committee**

Chairman Cassano, Chairwoman Mc Carthage Vahey, Vice Chairman Needleman, Vice Chairwoman Goupil, Ranking Member Zullo, and Members of the Committee :

I am pleased to register my enthusiastic support for this bill.

For the 53 years during which I practiced land use law in Fairfield County I was reminded on a daily basis of the inequity fostered by zoning regulations devoted primarily - and in some towns exclusively - to single-family homes on large lots.

The purposeful prejudices of the past which deliberately and explicitly operated against non-white and non-Christian home ownership have, it seems, given way to a more subtle but equally pernicious scheme of exclusion by regulation and socio-economic status.

This bill is a necessary and welcome first step toward addressing and correcting that inequity by requiring that each municipality provide a wider range of housing options designed to increase housing stock and create new opportunities for home ownership among those who have heretofore been excluded.

What should not be overlooked in assessing this bill is that opening ourselves to new residents from a variety of backgrounds is bound to have a salutary effect on the quality of community life by bringing new ideas, new energy, and new points of view to our communities and expanding our own world view and that of our children.

As for the specifics, I am pleased to note that the bill addresses the need to prioritize people over automobiles by encouraging reductions in parking requirements in favor of public transportation. (Although some may say that it doesn't go far enough in this respect).

And finally, while the bill does mandate rational and judicious minimum state-wide standards and provide "as of right" development opportunities, it does not appear to me to encroach in a meaningful way upon reasonable local control of density, regulation of use, enforcement, or the ability of regulators to adapt to exceptional local circumstances.

I urge your favorable consideration and passage of this long overdue and much needed attempt to address the inequities in our system of land use and regulation.

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