

Housing Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6592

AN ACT REQUIRING THE CONSIDERATION OF HOUSING NEEDS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN MUNICIPAL

Title: AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLANS.

Vote Date: 2/28/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/7/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Housing Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

Individuals with developmental disabilities experience increased hardships when trying to find affordable housing within communities. This bill would aid these individuals and create more accessibility of affordable housing.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None stated.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Arc of Connecticut, Executive Director, Win Evarts; supports this bill stating that there must be an increase affordable housing stock to lower the incidence of homelessness, keep families together, and promote inclusion. It is stated that as a parent to an IDD individual, having reliable and available affordable housing stock is necessary for independent living.

Connecticut Legal Rights Project, Executive Director, Kathy Flaherty; supports this bill stating that the state of Connecticut needs to increase its affordable housing supply so more people have the opportunity to build great lives within the community. It is stated that the word "developmental" should be removed as a modifier of disabilities.

Connecticut Resident, Kellie Milite; supports this bill stating that employment was not an issue before the COVID-19 pandemic. It was expressed that after losing employment due to the pandemic, homelessness became an issue for her. It is further stated that this bill would help end homelessness and aid those in need.

Fairfield County Center for Housing Opportunity, Director, Aicha Woods; supports this bill stating that it would help individuals with disabilities find housing and a 2021 report by the Urban Institute and Centers for Housing Opportunity was referred to which quantifies the need for affordable and accessible housing.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

River COG, Executive Director Samuel Gold; opposes this bill stating that they believe section 8-30j is not the correct section for this change, and further states that section 8-30g may need revising instead. It was stated that the legislature should look at regional housing planning at the state's nine council of governments, and to include the affordable housing needs of people with disabilities.

Woodbury Planning Commission, Member, Mary Connolly; opposes this bill stating that it removes the authority of towns to determine their own planning and development processes. It is also stated that this bill would force towns to build affordable housing and destroy the greenspace in town. It is further expressed that this bill is coercive.

Connecticut Resident, Landlord, Ava Smith; opposes this bill stating that the pandemic has caused a major loss of rental income already, but policies such as these only harm landlords further.

Connecticut Resident, Old Saybrook, Bernice DeLeo; opposes this bill stating that local elected officials should be the ones guiding Connecticut town's decisions, not the officials at the state or federal level. It is also expressed that there is a correlation between the new housing development that was put in near the train station and an increase in local crime.

Connecticut Resident, New Canaan, Michael Field; opposes this bill stating that it overuses property rights and sets unattainable goals. It is stated that bills like this will turn the typical quaint New England towns into mini high-rise cities and drive out people and businesses from CT.

Connecticut Resident, Ben Ognibene; opposes this bill stating that it is a total disenfranchisement of citizens of local communities, as it will change the nature and character of local towns while also increasing local taxes.

Connecticut Resident, Erik Passanate; opposes this bill stating that municipal zoning and development should be left in the hands of local zoning boards. It is also stated that many towns are already overdeveloped and increasing housing density will drive citizens out of the state.

Connecticut Residents, Fran and Susan McNulty; oppose this bill stating that the bill gives too much unilateral authority to the state and undermines the logic of why local governing leaders were put in place years ago.

Connecticut Resident, Françoise Williams; opposes this bill stating that one piece of legislation will not fit all 169 municipalities, and this issue should be left up to local decision making. It is further stated that dense development does not make sense from an environmental perspective.

Connecticut Resident, Timothy Clark: opposes this bill stating that this issue needs to be in the hands of individual, local communities, and not decided at the state level despite his support for affordable housing.

Connecticut Resident, Tracey Kilmartin: opposes this bill stating that new affordable housing developments will take away from the unique natural beauty of the state of Connecticut and all its small communities. It is stated that a more reasonable approach may be to ask towns to put forward their own plans to add affordable housing to their community based on the town's own infrastructure, terrain, and character.

Connecticut Resident, Zino Carr: opposes this bill stating that it will cause undue hardships on the century-old communities in Connecticut that pride themselves on being rural and have open space and property. It is stated that this bill will force high density housing into towns that do not wish to home these communities.

Reported by: Riley St. Pierre

Date: 3/13/23