Dear Representative Luxenberg, Senator Moore, and members of the Housing Committee:

Thank you for having me today. My name is Ron Hurt. I am alder of Ward 3 in New Haven, and I work at Retreat Behavioral Health as a clinical team lead. I am also elder at Deliverance Temple Church in the Hill neighborhood and a member of New Haven Rising. I am here to testify in support of HB 6588 to implement a cap on rent increases in Connecticut.

I am myself currently looking for housing and have been finding that the cost of rents is prohibitive for not just myself but for many of my constituents in the Hill. I love what I do, helping people everyday, but the rising cost of housing is making it harder and harder for me to stay where I am and do the work I do. There are many people in my community who are struggling to stay in their homes. Landlords raising the rents in high amounts, compounded with the effects of the pandemic, has made the future uncertain for so many people in our state.

I am upset that this is happening because what will happen to us when we can’t make ends meet? There are many tenants I know who’s rent has been raised by two or even three hundred dollars at a time. I know that there are undocumented families who have no recourse to fight this or to pay much more for housing, who end up in eviction proceedings, or even homeless.

The effect of rising housing costs means that people have to move out of our city and even our state, to seek a future elsewhere.. People also resort to other means to make ends meet, putting their futures, and their family’s futures in jeopardy. I know of families whose children had to leave college and come home to help because the cost of housing became to much. If people didn't have to worry about whether or not they can afford their rent year to year, they will have better health, afford proper food, and can focus on other goals in life such as getting their education, keeping families together, and having a better future.

I urge you to support passing HB6588 with amendments that could make it even stronger for those of us who are struggling the most. Hopefully the cap can be set even lower, and there can be additional protections for tenants who are facing no cause evictions. Thank you for your time.