

Housing Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-142

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HOUSING AUTHORITY RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM AND A HOUSING CHOICE

Title: VOUCHER TASK FORCE.

Vote Date: 2/29/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/20/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Housing Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill, which establishes a Housing Authority Resident Quality of Life Improvement Grant Program and a Housing Choice Voucher Task Force, was brought before the Housing Committee primarily because the pre-existing Housing Choice Voucher Program is seen as a vital resource for those at risk of shelter insecurity, yet those who qualify for its services are often unaware of or confused about the process of getting the benefits of this service. A task force addressing accessibility issues with the voucher program is also potentially beneficial because of the need to address the amount of time people are waitlisted for the program, leaving many to remain unhoused for far longer than is necessary.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Senator Martin Looney, Senate President Pro Tempore, Connecticut General Assembly \(CGA\)](#): Supports this bill stating that the existing housing choice voucher program can be confusing for constituents trying to enroll in the program and for those who are enrolled, the time on the wait list can be far too long; therefore, a task force is needed to work on finding solutions to these problems. Additionally, the quality-of-life grant program is needed to make necessary improvements to housing authorities.

[Donna DellaCamera, Franklin Communities](#): Supports this bill.

[Jessica Doll, Executive Director at the Connecticut Apartment Association \(CTAA\)](#) and [Lauren Tagliatela, CCO-CTAA](#) and [Louis Tagliatela, Jr., Member, CTAA](#): Supports this bill stating that it will improve residents of housing authorities' quality of life.

[Jim Perras, CEO, Home Builders & Remodelers of Connecticut](#): Supports this bill because the grant program and voucher task force would have a positive impact on tenants without limiting property rights or otherwise compromising a landlord's ability to provide safe housing for those in the state.

[John Souza, President, Connecticut Coalition of Property Owners](#): Supports this bill stating that it will improve the lives of tenants in Connecticut.

[Stephen Tagliatela, Manager, Saybrook Point Resort and Marina](#): Supports this bill stating that the committee can help solve the problem of the CT housing shortage by creating a friendly environment for landlords and investors in housing.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Jim Handlesman](#): Opposes this bill.

[Anonymous, Landlord](#): Opposes this bill and asks the state government to stop creating these policies or ideas which are perceived to be a waste of money and take time away from addressing more pressing issues.

[Nakita Norton, Property Manager](#): Opposes the bill.

[Raphael Podolsky, Attorney and Policy Advocate, Connecticut Legal Services, Inc.](#): Opposes this bill stating that the quality of life improvement grant program is not properly defined as it is not clear what kind of programs it is intended to support, or whether it is intended for residents in federal or state-funded public housing, and that it is also not made clear where the funding comes from as no appropriation is requested and it does not seem to be a bondable proposal. Regarding the task force, there is similarly little clarity regarding its specific objectives, and it is also unclear why these objectives would not be better addressed through S.B. 146.

[Thurston Thurston, Thurston Properties LLC](#): Opposes this bill stating that restricting how a landlord can use private property will only hurt the rental market and, if forced to sell, there will be fewer options for housing in the end.

[Alex Rivera, Landlord](#): Opposes this bill stating that funds going to organizations like this task force are pulling money away from potentially addressing the root causes of things like homelessness, mental health, and joblessness.

Reported by: George Vatis

Date: 3/11/2024