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**TESTIMONY OF  
CONNECTICUT PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
REGARDING *PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING LAND USE APPEALS  
STATUTE 8-30G*  
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
FEBRUARY 16, 2017**

Representative Butler, Senator Hwang, and Senator Slossberg, and members of the Housing Committee. I am pleased to submit this testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Public Health Association where I serve as Co-Chair of the Advocacy Committee. The Connecticut Public Health Association (CPHA) is aware of several bills under consideration that would alter and potentially undermine 8-30g, the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Statute. CPHA opposes any efforts to weaken 8-30g and supports the statute as it is currently written.

Access to safe, affordable housing is a critical aspect of maintaining health. The Public Health community has long recognized the importance of housing that is free from environmental hazards, that is located in a safe and supportive community, and that does not place unnecessary stress on a family resulting from cost. The cost of housing is one of the greatest threats to Connecticut families. Connecticut is a state with high housing costs that is desperately in need of more affordable homes for low and moderate income families, young professionals, and the aging population. This is not only a matter of public health, but is a threat to our state's economy as individuals and families who cannot afford to live here are rapidly departing. In fact, according to 2010 US census data, Connecticut ranked third in the nation for the greatest loss of 25-34 year olds between 1990 and 2010.

None of the above should be surprising to the Housing Committee, but what is disconcerting are the number of bills that threaten to undermine 8-30g, a necessary tool that expands housing opportunity across the state. Concentrating the development of affordable housing units in certain municipalities has been

shown to be ineffective in addressing the housing crisis. Housing choice is an essential component of improving the health and well-being of the population. Evidence shows that housing choice enables individuals and families to improve their economic situation, achieve educational and employment goals, and better care for their families.

8-30g was designed to ensure that all municipalities in Connecticut provide options for affordable housing, and, according to the Partnership for Strong Communities, 31 municipalities have already met the 10% affordable housing threshold exempting towns from the rules under this statute. 8-30g already includes important and fair moratorium provisions, which provide ways for towns to achieve respite from 8-30g without having to reach the 10% threshold, including four-year moratoriums in some cases.

Without affordable housing, individuals and families do not have the opportunity to succeed, much less to stay healthy. It is the responsibility of every municipality in the state to ensure that it provides this most basic human need for its residents. This burden cannot be placed solely on the major cities, and in reviewing the list of municipalities that have achieved the threshold, it is clear that the burden is falling on those very cities that are struggling most. If 8-30g is undermined, there would be even fewer opportunities to increase housing choice by expanding affordable housing development outside of a handful of municipalities. CPHA strongly opposes any efforts to undermine this statute and encourages the Housing Committee to do the same.

For additional information on CPHA's position on 8-30g or other issues related to health equity, public health infrastructure, environmental health, or prevention, please contact Jenna Lupi, [jenna.lupi@gmail.com](mailto:jenna.lupi@gmail.com) or 203-804-3562.