



Legislative Testimony
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**Written Testimony Supporting
House Bill 5533, An Act Concerning the State's
Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development**

Senator Cassano, Senator Logan, Representative Lemar, and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee:

My name is Kaley Lentini, and I am legislative counsel for the ACLU of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 5533, An Act Concerning the State's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, which would require the Department of Housing to produce more detailed, meaningful data on how Connecticut is spending federal dollars to meet its obligations to further fair housing across the state.

Government transparency is an essential part of our democracy. In recognition of the need for open access to information, Connecticut and federal law already require the state Department of Housing to issue regular reports on how the state is working to create fair, affordable housing. But in practice, the state has failed to meet the spirit of this duty. Current reports produce only piecemeal data, and the way it is presented makes it difficult for the public to know whether the state is meeting its obligation to affirmatively further fair housing.

This bill takes an important step toward remedying this problem. By requiring the Department of Housing to set tangible goals and measure progress on an annual basis, House Bill 5533 will create an important window into whether and how the state is meeting its fair housing responsibilities.

The ACLU-CT has long advocated against housing segregation in the state. For example, when the Hartford Housing Authority razed the city's Charter Oak Terrace project two

decades ago, we went to court to try to ensure that displaced families would not be steered into substandard housing.

Through this work, we have learned that progress on fair housing requires continued effort and investment by both state government and Connecticut residents. For this reason, we believe that consistent monitoring and open access to reporting is critical for transparency and accountability.

This bill will help to provide Connecticut residents with access to the information necessary to help understand the state's housing problems and hold the government accountable. For these reasons, we urge this committee to support House Bill 5533.