



Legislative Testimony
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Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 5156, An Act Requiring Notice of Rent Increases

Senator Moore, Representative Luxenberg, Ranking Members Sampson and Scott, and members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Jess Zaccagnino, and I am the policy counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am writing to testify in support of House Bill 5156, An Act Requiring Notice of Rent Increases.

The ACLU-CT believes that everyone deserves access to safe and affordable housing, including justice-impacted people. When housing becomes unaffordable, there are cascading effects—like displacement from beloved homes, neighborhoods, and schools. When working people can afford to pay their rent, they can take better care of their families. Even the process of applying for apartments is costly and onerous—in addition to charging first and last months of rent and a security deposit, it is common for landlords to pass the fees of credit reports, criminal background checks, employment history reports, and rental history reports off to tenants. This is simply unsustainable for people applying for housing as rent has skyrocketed across the country and across the state, increasing by 20 percent on average over the last two years.¹

Rent hikes and no-fault evictions are displacing people from their homes and communities, fueling gentrification, and increasing evictions and homelessness, which, because of systemic racism and systemic inequity, disproportionately harms

¹ See, e.g., Ronnuala Darby-Hudgens, *Expanded Fair Rent Commissions*, CONN. FAIR HOUSING CTR. (Apr. 1, 2022), <https://www.ctfairhousing.org/expanded-fair-rent-commissions/>.

Black and brown working-class renters and immigrants. Oftentimes, people are not aware of their rights during eviction proceedings—or they do not even get proper notice—because not everybody has easy access to a lawyer. House Bill 5156 would require no fewer than sixty days’ notice of any increase of rent, a vital measure while housing prices continue to soar and availability dwindles. The ACLU-CT supports House Bill 5156, and urges this Committee to do the same.