PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

Partnership for Strong Communities promotes equitable change in Connecticut housing policy by coordinating advocacy, advancing research, and uniting diverse partners

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSING COMMITTEE
SEAN GHIO, POLICY DIRECTOR
PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

FEBRUARY 27, 2025

H.B. No. 7031 (RAISED) AN ACT INCLUDING ACCESSORY APARTMENTS IN THE CALCULATION OF THE THRESHOLD FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPEALS PROCEDURE.

Representative Felipe, Senator Marx, Representative Scott, Senator Sampson and distinguished members of the Housing Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today. I am Sean Ghio, Policy Director with the Partnership for Strong Communities. We are a statewide nonprofit research, policy and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring everyone in Connecticut has a safe, stable home that is affordable to them in an equitable community of their choice.

We respectfully request that the committee oppose H.B. 7031.

The bill would count all accessory apartments as affordable housing for purposes of determining whether a municipality is exempt from the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure (CGS Sec. 8-30g). The current statute includes accessory apartments only if they are subject to a restriction that limits the income of the tenant, assuring that the apartments are in fact affordable. The bill would remove that requirement and count all accessory apartments toward Section 8-30g totals without consideration of the affordability of the home or the income of the tenant(s).

Clearly, this bill is intended to grant municipalities 'relief' from Section 8-30g without any expansion of affordable housing supply. It will neither create nor preserve a single affordable home. It would likely result in towns achieving a moratorium or exemption from Section 8-30g without any easing of the severe housing cost burden of their residents or any of the 1 in 7 Connecticut households that spends more than half of their income on housing costs.

We ask the committee to reject HB 7031. It will do nothing to alleviate Connecticut's housing crisis.