PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

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TESTIMONY REGARDING PROPOSED SB 1313- AN ACT INCREASING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN ONE-HALF MILE OF PUBLIC TRANSIT STATIONS
FEBRUARY 21, 2025

Hon. Co-Chairs Representative Kavros DeGraw and Senator Rahman, Ranking members Rep. Zullo and Senator Gordon, and Vice-Chairs Rep. Chafee and Senator Needleman, my name is Michelle Montano, and I am a Communications and Policy Analyst at 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 support SB 1313 with a suggested amendment.

Connecticut is facing a severe housing crisis, with a shortage of over 250,000 homes. Planning and zoning commissions decide where and what type of homes can be built in our towns, but they aren't approving enough to meet the need. In 2023, 4,684 potential new homes were lost— due to being denied, downsized, withdrawn, or revoked by local land use commissions. The only way to address this crisis is to reform our land use regulations to allow homes to be built. SB 1313 would encourage transit-oriented development (TOD), the type of development our state critically needs. TOD reduces sprawl, connects people to local businesses and jobs, and helps achieve environmental and sustainability goals.

The provisions in SB 1313 reflect best practices for TOD and will help create vibrant, connected communities. However, we support the recommendations of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association that the committee should revisit Section 2, subsection 3 (starting on line 78) regarding manufactured homes. While manufactured housing is an important component of affordability, the limited land available within a half-mile of transit stations should be prioritized for higher-density, multi-story housing that makes the most of this critical space. To fully realize the benefits of this bill, we suggest removing this provision to ensure that TOD zones are utilized effectively.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

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