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 PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA
PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES
WEDNESDAY MARCH 4, 2026

SUPPORT S.B. 364 AN ACT CONCERNING EXTREME WEATHER PROTOCOLS

Senator Anwar, Representative McCarthy Vahey, Representative Belton, Senator Marx, Senator McCrory, Senator Somers, Representative Karides-Ditria and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **S.B. 364 – An Act Concerning Extreme Weather Protocols.** I am Danielle Hubley, Advocacy & Education Manager 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.

Since 2021, homelessness has increased 44%. In the past year alone, unsheltered homelessness rose 45%, with more people living outside across communities in every ZIP code in CT —rural, suburban, and urban alike[1]. In 2025, nine homeless people in CT froze to death living outdoors.[2] 2026 has been similarly brutally cold for days and sometimes weeks at a time. We know these concerns don't just end with cold weather. As the winter thaws and temperatures increase, concerns about unsafe living conditions will shift to extreme heat, severe storms and poor air quality. Often, the only place people experiencing homelessness can afford to live in is their cars, in a tent, or under a bridge. These forms of "shelter" allow little to no protection from the natural elements. Without alternatives, especially during times of extreme weather, these unsheltered individuals are surviving with a severely increased risk of life threatening or even fatal conditions[3].

By standardizing year-round guidance for when state and municipalities must activate extreme weather protocols, both in cold and warm months, Connecticut can reduce the number of

[1] Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, Bring People Inside During Extreme Weather, 2026. http://cceh.org/2026-pa-fact-sheets/
[2] https://www.ctinsider.com/news/article/ct-homeless-deaths-hypothermia-21279597.php (accessed 3/2/26)

[3] Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, Establish Year-Round Extreme Weather Protocols, 2026. http://cceh.org/2026-pa-fact-sheets/

households negatively exposed to unsafe living conditions throughout the year. Part of this policy must include a mandate to post and share information about these standardized protocols on publicly available websites and in public buildings, like libraries.

In supporting this bill, our legislature reaffirms Connecticut's commitment to human dignity and practical solutions that protect our most vulnerable residents from dangerous climate conditions. It is imperative that the state support investments in our homeless crisis response system, in affordable housing initiatives and through improved standardized protocols. With a combination of investments and procedural changes, we can move towards long-term solutions that provide stability and support for individuals and families experiencing housing insecurity.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Danielle Hubley
Advocacy & Education Manager
Partnership for Strong Communities