

Template Letter to Governor Lamont from Municipalities

Ask your local elected and appointed leaders (Mayors, Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, City & Town Councils, Representative Town Meeting, Planning & Zoning Officials, Zoning Board of Appeals, Inland Wetlands, Water Pollution Control, Historical Commission, Chambers of Commerce, Environmental Commissions) to sign this letter. Feel free to customize to fit your municipality.

June XX, 2025

Dear Governor Lamont,

We, the undersigned elected and appointed officials of _____
[Mayors and First Selectmen of Connecticut's cities and towns, etc.]
respectfully urge you to veto HB 5002, An Act Concerning Housing and the
Needs of Homeless Persons.

While we share your commitment to addressing Connecticut's housing challenges, this bill imposes sweeping, unfunded state mandates that undermine local governance, economic vitality, and thoughtful planning—goals we know you deeply value.

Your leadership has consistently emphasized housing solutions that balance affordability with economic growth and local empowerment. In your 2023 remarks at the Connecticut Association of Realtors conference, you highlighted the need to attract residents by making housing accessible while preserving community character. At the 2024 CT Housing Conference, you advocated for local solutions to the housing crisis, noting that top-down approaches often fail to account for unique municipal needs.

Our specific objections to HB 5002 include:

1. **Conversion of Commercial Lots to “As-of-Right” Middle Housing:** The bill allows middle housing on all commercial lots with minimal local oversight, risking the repurposing of viable commercial properties that are critical for economic growth. Prioritizing housing over commercial revenue, which funds municipal budgets and requires fewer services than residential development, jeopardizes sustainable commercial growth and economic vitality.

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2. **Arbitrary “Fair Share” Mandates:** The bill imposes statewide affordable housing goals, effectively establishing that cities and towns zone for development of their “fair share”. To build both the fair share and the market value units, total development will range from a low of 1% of existing housing stock for a large city to 324% for a small town with an unusually (and unexplainable) large fair share allocation — all without state funding for necessary impacted services like schools, roads, and other infrastructure. Fair Share doesn't give towns any new tools or resources to support housing creation. Instead, it creates an entirely new compliance framework -- on top of 8-30g, Work Live Ride. The “Fair Share” mandate, despite being rebranded, it is arbitrary and capricious, and requires towns to report to the legislature and negotiate the unrealistic housing target that are in the legislation.

3. **Elimination of Parking Requirements:** HB 5002 removes off-street parking requirements for buildings under 24 units and allows developers to determine parking for larger projects near train stations. This indiscriminate policy ignores local realities and could exacerbate infrastructure strain, contrary to your focus on practical, community-driven housing solutions.

4. **Linking Infrastructure Grants to Zoning Compliance:** The bill ties critical state grants, like STEAP, to compliance with zoning changes, setting a dangerous precedent. Your budget proposals have prioritized infrastructure without such punitive linkages, recognizing that roads and bridges are unrelated to zoning policy and that grants should be made on the merits of the specific project proposal.

5. **Unfunded Legal Costs for 8-30g Lawsuits:** Towns could be forced to pay developers’ legal fees in 8-30g lawsuits, creating another unfunded mandate. This risks municipal budgets without clear fiscal impact analysis, clashing with your commitment to fiscal responsibility.

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6. **Erosion of Local Planning:** HB 5002 overrides local Plans of Conservation and Development. Your formation of the Connecticut Interagency Council on Homelessness reflects a collaborative, multi-faceted approach to housing challenges. This bill's top-down mandates undermine such partnerships.

We commend your efforts to address housing needs through targeted investments, like the Brownfield Remediation Program and CT Home Funds, which empower communities. A veto of this bill reinforce your commitment to working with municipalities to craft incentivized, locally-led solutions that align with your vision of sustainable, affordable and rational housing growth.

We respectfully request that you veto this bill and partner with us to develop housing policies that respect local governance, support economic vitality, and deliver meaningful affordability for all Connecticut residents.

Sincerely,

[Names & Positions Held]