

H.B. 6107 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REORGANIZATION OF THE ZONING ENABLING ACT AND THE PROMOTION OF MUNICIPAL COMPLIANCE.

H.B. 6107 aligns the Zoning Enabling Act, CGS § 8-2 with the state's policy goal of requiring municipalities to plan and provide for multifamily housing and housing affordable to low-and moderate-income families.

1. Requires municipalities comply with existing law's affordable housing plan requirement by January 1, 2023 and requires the convening of a working group.

The working group will study municipal zoning and affordable housing planning requirements related to housing choice and provide recommended guidelines for municipal compliance.

2. Reiterates municipalities' obligation to affirmatively further the purposes of the federal Fair Housing Act through local regulations.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. Exclusionary zoning practices have fostered racial and economic segregation in Connecticut for decades, hurting our residents and economy.

3. Requires municipalities provide for the development of varied housing types and promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing.

Requires zoning regulations to provide for, rather than encourage, a variety of housing development opportunities to meet regional need beyond single family homes, including lower cost housing types such as duplexes, triplexes, and apartment buildings.

4. Eliminates a requirement that regulations be made with reasonable consideration as to the "character" of a district.

The term "character" is highly subjective and has been used as the basis of discriminatory zoning decisions, including denial of affordable housing development. Reasonable aspects of "character" are already part of § 8-2, including considerations of historic preservation, environmental impact, density, scale, location, and the suitability of uses.

5. Reorganizes the Zoning Enabling Act.

The Zoning Enabling Act has been amended more than 30 times since it was enacted in 1959. The result is a law that is a run-on sentence that can be confusing and difficult to interpret.