

**Testimony of Denise Weeks in Support of S.B. 752,
An Act Concerning Housing Segregation
Tuesday, February 28th, 2017**

Thank you Chairs and Members of the Housing Committee for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Denise Weeks. I am a resident of Glastonbury and have volunteered in the after-school program at the Hartford Catholic Worker in the North End of Hartford for the last 10 years.

I am testifying today in support of S.B. 752, An Act Concerning Housing Segregation.

1. Connecticut is one of the most racially and economically segregated states in the country.
2. This is due to historic and current policies that continue to shape our state, including exclusionary zoning, racial covenants, redlining, and other policies.
3. As a result, people of color are concentrated in particular areas of the state like Hartford's North End, areas that are struggling.
4. We need to invest in revitalizing these struggling communities, but we also need to consciously work to generate housing choices in thriving communities like mine, where housing opportunities for low income families of color have been limited and segregated in nature.
5. The poverty and disparities in education experienced in Hartford, including the closing of Clark School, are the result of these historic policies and the children I work with in Hartford's North End are among its most undeserving victims.
6. Research has shown that where you live strongly influences your chances of success.

Following the closing of Clark School several of the students I work with have taken advantage of Open Choice and Magnet Schools and I have seen the marked difference in academic achievement and self-confidence that occurs when students from struggling communities are given an opportunity to attend schools in more privileged communities.

But all children experience better educational and life outcomes in mixed income environments. That is why I want to see more affordable housing IN MY TOWN, housing that is available throughout the community, not restricted to one section of town.

We need government policies that actively work to ensure that towns that are thriving take on their fair share of affordable housing.

This proposal offers additional incentives to towns like mine to undertake the planning necessary to foster affordable housing development.

That is why I ask you to support S.B. 752, An Act Concerning Housing Segregation.

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