



CAFCA
Connecticut Association
for Community Action

**February 18, 2021 Public Hearing Testimony before the
Connecticut General Assembly's
Housing Committee**

Board of Directors

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Access Community
Action Agency, Inc.

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Alliance for Community
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New Opportunities, Inc.
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David Morgan
TEAM, Inc.

Deborah Monahan
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for Community Action,
Inc. (TVCCA)

In support of

Senate Bill 804: An Act Concerning Inclusion in Certain Communities

Distinguished Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Ranking Members, and Members, my name is Deb Polun, and I am the Executive Director for the Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA), the state association that works with Connecticut's nine Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the state and federal designated antipoverty agencies serving nearly 200,000 low- and moderate-income people in all 169 cities and towns across the state.

I am here today to express our support for Senate Bill 804, *An Act Concerning Inclusion in Certain Communities*.

CAAs connect their customers to essential programs and services like employment and training, housing and shelter, energy and heating assistance, early childhood care and education, asset development, and food and nutrition. Through a holistic, comprehensive, multigenerational approach, CAAs work with those in need to plan, achieve, and maintain a realistic path to short and long-term economic self-sufficiency.

Connecticut's Community Action Agencies know and understand just how critical housing is to help address and alleviate the cycle of poverty. Yet a new study¹ by the Urban Institute reveals that Connecticut does not have adequate, affordable housing stock available for its low-income residents, which include childcare workers, cashiers, and unemployed laborers, among others. There are an estimated 86,068 more low-income households than there are available, affordable housing units. Of Connecticut's eight counties, not one has enough affordable housing units to meet the need with Fairfield, Hartford and New Haven counties showing the biggest gap in supply and demand.

Connecticut must support initiatives that promote inclusive communities where everyone has an opportunity to thrive. Investing in policies that help incentivize municipalities to create more affordable housing options is crucial in these efforts, and in helping to prevent homelessness. Without them, the housing situation in Connecticut will get worse, and residents facing dire financial difficulties will end up sleeping on the street rather than in a bed.

In closing, I urge you to support S.B. 804. Thank you for raising this important bill and for your time and consideration.

¹ Stuart, Christie, et al. *Housing Connecticut's Future: Meeting the State's Affordable and Accessible Housing Needs*. Urban Institute, 2021.
https://www.urban.org/research/publication/housing-connecticuts-future-meeting-states-affordable-and-accessible-housing-needs/view/full_report