



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, February 28th, 2023

Contact: Andrew Tammaro, (203) 710-1422
andrew.tammaro@cga.ct.gov

REP. O'DEA, HOUSE REPUBLICANS UNROLL THE BLUEPRINT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Will Increase Actual Affordable Housing Stock with Respect for Local Guidelines

NEW CANAAN – Today, **Deputy House Republican Leader Tom O'Dea (R-125)**, **State Rep. Tony Scott (R-112)**, **State Rep. Joe Zullo (R-99)** and House Republicans stood with local leaders and community advocates to outline a comprehensive package of legislative proposals to increase the actual affordable housing stock in Connecticut over time with guidelines that empower municipalities with unique circumstances.

The policies will address shortcomings in Connecticut state statute section 8-30g which provides inadequate guidelines for measuring affordable housing supply in municipalities across the state. The plan will foster a wholistic approach to evaluating affordable housing in Connecticut and unshackle towns with earnest development efforts.

The package of policy proposals will address two major goals:

1. Make statewide, affordable housing goals more achievable by granting municipalities more freedom to set guidelines according to their communities' unique needs; and
2. Foster an honest affordable housing development culture by incentivizing certain private and public investments in the best interest of residents and small, highly developed towns.

"New Canaan and other similar towns throughout Connecticut have been left in the dust by restrictive and antiquated guidelines on affordable housing since 8-30g became law three decades ago," **Deputy Leader Rep. Tom O'Dea** said. "Our community has made significant investments in our affordable units and in my tenure on the New Canaan Town Council and as a state representative, have always balanced our goals to increase stock while protecting local control of development decisions. Our proposals will level the playing field for our small towns and encourage continued growth without the threat of intrusive state government."

"I'm supportive of having affordable housing, but let's do it at the local level, not from Hartford. The biggest overall concern I hear about 8-30g is that Hartford is taking away local control from locally elected officials in deciding what is best for municipalities. This is not a one-size fits all situation and

doing a disservice to a vast majority of municipalities who are not cities,” said **Rep. Tony Scott, Ranking Member of the Housing Committee.**

“It’s long past time that we modernize 8-30g to better reflect the unique housing needs of towns and cities across our State,” **Rep. Zullo, Ranking Member of the Housing Committee** said. “We need affordability standards that recognize the many municipalities across the State with large, naturally occurring affordable housing stocks. 8-30g is a blunt instrument and we can make it a fairer and more effective tool for creating housing opportunities through these and other commonsense updates.”

“There is bipartisan support for changing the 8-30g housing law to increase local control over land use policies,” said **Sen. Ryan Fazio.** “We are trying to bring people together across the aisle to change the law and protect our towns and cities while advancing our affordable housing goals in a sustainable way. We thank New Canaan residents for their support of our initiatives and we are hoping a public hearing will soon be scheduled so people can have an opportunity to speak out.”

Connecticut's state statute section 8-30g allows builders to take a municipality to court if it denies a proposed affordable housing development. Municipalities are protected from legal action if at least 10% of their total housing stock is deemed affordable by state guidelines. Currently, only 2.91% of New Canaan's total housing stock meets the threshold. Under the Republicans' proposals, naturally occurring affordable units would qualify and free eligible towns from legal action.

The proposals detailed by House and Senate Republicans include:

- Incorporating existing properties that meet affordability standards ([HB 5326](#))
- Eliminating deed restrictions for owner-occupied affordable housing which restricts the ability to create equity ([HB 5326](#))
- Increasing municipal control over zoning by removing the deadline for opt out of the "as of right" accessory apartment requirements ([HB 5326](#))
- Granting a right of first refusal to municipalities for set aside developments and to require that any municipalities exercising such right complete such developments within 8 years ([HB 5783](#))
- Lowering the threshold in state statute for towns of up to 25,000 residents and are greater than 90% developed from 10% to 5% ([HB 5794](#))
- Including affordable housing developments built after a prior appeals moratorium to count towards total units ([SB 856](#))

###