

## **Housing Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT**

**Bill No.:** SB-1266

**Title:** AN ACT REQUIRING THE POSTING OF FAIR RENT COMMISSION BYLAWS.

**Vote Date:** 2/20/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 2/13/2025

**File No.:** 72

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### **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Housing Committee

### **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill came to the committee via proposed bill from Senator Sampson and Representative Fishbein. As Fair Rent Commissions have a certain level of discretion over the creation of their bylaws, the introducing legislators felt that parties appearing before these commissions may benefit from the public posting of its bylaws. The JFS language for S.B. 1266 included previous language from [S.B. 1268](#), which proposed that Fair Rent Commission hearings should be open to the public. The final language of S.B. 1266 seeks to increase public access and transparency to Fair Rent Commission proceedings.

### **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

[Mairead Painter, State Long Term Care Ombudsman](#) – Mairead Painter supported this bill that plays a critical role in ensuring housing stability, affordability, and transparency, all essential for protecting the rights and well-being of those in long-term care settings, those in the greater community, and those transitioning back into the community. Painter observed many residents in long-term care facilities face challenges related to rental agreements and housing costs, therefore, "The availability of fair rent commission bylaws online will enhance accessibility by allowing residents and their families immediate access to important information, enabling them to understand their rights and the mechanisms available to address rental concerns." Painter added this bill will promote accountability and foster trust among residents, families, and the broader community.

## NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Rob Sampson, State Senator](#) – State Senator Rob Sampson supported this bill as an important measure, "designed to promote transparency and accountability within the operations of Fair Rent Commissions." Senator Sampson added that the current lack of transparency and inconsistencies in decision making can have detrimental effects on both tenants and housing providers.

[Jessica Doll, Executive Director, CTAA](#) – Jessica Doll supported this bill and stated that bylaws should be posted, and all hearings should be open to the public, to simplify the process for commissions, residents, and housing providers.

[Morgan Miller, Board of Directors, CT Apartment Association](#) – Morgan Miller supported this bill. They support, "increasing the guidelines and parameters in which a Commission can operate to increase equal representation between parties" and believes that more focus should be placed on Fair Market Rent with a comparable rental study as a requirement. They concluded that, "Commission bylaws and meetings should be open to the public to increase transparency."

The following testimonies expressed similar support:

[Anonymous](#)

[Simon Thurm](#)

[Donna Clarke, small scope property owner](#)

[Bob De Cosmo, President of CT Property Owners Alliance](#)

[Richard Sadlon, Sadlon Properties LLC, Owner](#)

[Jess Zaccagnino, Policy Counsel, ACLU-CT](#) – Jess Zaccagnino supported this bill, and while everyone needs a safe, sanitary, and stable place to live, rent has increased by 20% on average over the last two years, wages have not. They added that the frequency of no-fault evictions also increased, stating that, "People in Connecticut cannot have a future here if they cannot afford a place to live." Zaccagnino explained that unaffordable housing leads to cascading effects, including displacement from beloved homes, neighborhoods, and schools, which disproportionately harms Black and brown working-class renters and immigrants. Zaccagnino stated, "The ACLU-CT supports bills that expand the scope, authority, and accessibility of fair rent commissions in this state."

[Samuel Eddinger](#) – Samuel Eddinger supported this bill and viewed transparency as fundamental to maintaining trust between property owners, tenants, and governing bodies. Eddinger added that this bill will promote accountability, fairness, and consistency when addressing rental disputes, allowing tenants to feel more confident about their concerns being handled impartially.

[Paul Januszewski, Housing Provider](#) – Paul Januszewski supported this bill and stated current Fair Rent Commissions allowed local municipalities to create their own policies leading to inconsistencies for housing providers. Januszewski added other suggestions, such as equal representation between the parties, a dollar threshold for complaints, and more focus on HUD's fair market rent levels. Januszewski currently serves on a Fair Rent Commission that holds hearings within 45 days of receiving a complaint and must hold the hearing and deliberations in public, record them, and render a decision within 21 days of the

hearing, resulting in what they believe to be fair and equitable hearings that, "provide a better alternative to resolving conflicts than many of the Bills proposed over this and the last few years that aim to curb abuses by corporate based and large-scale landlords."

[John Souza, President, CT Coalition Of Property Owners](#) – John Souza supported this bill as necessary to create a just, uniformly enforced and transparent statewide fair rent system. Souza suggested that other, much needed changes should include membership being balanced between housing providers, tenants, a realtor, and a member of the public, and "Decisions favoring the landlord must be retroactive to date of filing, to discourage the unnecessary burden of repeat filings to save several months of rent increase every year."

The following testimonies express general support of the bill:

[Susan Bradford](#)

[Adam Bonoff](#)

[Tyler Smith](#)

[Jim Perras, CEO HBRA of CT](#)

[Chris Senecal, Sr Public Policy Officer, Hartford Foundation](#)

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

The following testimony express general opposition to the bill:

[Linda Dalessio](#)

[Joseph Fiorella](#) – Joseph Fiorella is in opposition of this bill and explained it would make being a housing provider harder than it currently is. Fiorella is a small business owner, having bought and sold numerous investment properties, and explained that this bill and others will make rents go up and tenants will become higher risks.

[Amy Peltier, Coalition and Advocacy Director, Partnership 4 Strong Communities](#) – Amy Peltier is in opposition of this bill and stated that this bill is unnecessary, explaining that "Fair rent commissions are already subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which requires that the meetings of municipal government agencies be public and that relevant documents be publicly available."

The following testimony expressed similar opposition:

[Raphael L. Podolsky, Attorney, Policy Advocate, Connecticut Legal Services-Inc.](#)

[Sarah White, Attorney, Connecticut Fair Housing Center](#)

**Reported by: Arianna Tsikitas, Clerk  
Jasmine Jones, Assistant Clerk**

**Date: 3/14/2025**