



Ned Lamont
Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING



Seila Mosquera-Bruno
Commissioner

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE BONDING
SUBCOMMITTEE
MARCH 18, 2019

SEILA MOSQUERA-BRUNO, COMMISSIONER
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

**REMARKS CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR THE FY 2020 – FY 2021
BIENNIUM**

Good morning Senator Moore, Representative Miller, Senator Witkos, Representative Floren and the distinguished members of the Bonding Subcommittee. My name is Seila Mosquera-Bruno and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Housing. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony before you regarding Governor Lamont's biennial budget.

DOH is committed to its mission of a Connecticut where affordable housing, in strong, vibrant, and inclusive communities, is accessible to individuals and families across the state and homelessness is a thing of the past. Many of the Department's programs are aimed at preserving our existing stock of affordable housing, as well as capital funding for new development opportunities. Over the past eight years there has been a significant investment into expanding the State's affordable housing stock. In the last two years alone, the State, working through the Department of Housing, has invested more than \$111 Million in affordable housing development. This has translated into more than 2,500 housing units, of which 1,968 units are affordable. This has been an incredible achievement for the State of Connecticut towards addressing its affordable housing needs.

Governor Lamont's biennial budget provides necessary recapitalization of the Down Payment Assistance program, administered through our partner agency, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority. At the same time, it authorizes funding for a new "teacher focused" down payment assistance program, aimed at providing additional opportunities to allow teachers to live in the communities in which they work. Also, it continues the commitment of the prior administration relative to addressing the Crumbling Foundation issue, by reauthorizing \$20MM in each of the next two years.

As you have seen, we have authorizations in a variety of existing Bond Funds, including the Housing Trust Fund (which serves individuals and families with incomes up to 120% of Area Median Income) and the Affordable Housing Program (commonly referred to as "Flex") which serves individuals and families with incomes between zero and 80% of AMI. Our current authorizations across all of these funds is in the neighborhood of \$285 Million.



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Although there are existing commitments and awards for some of these funds, we are actively reviewing the Department's development portfolio, and in consultation with our development partners, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and our other funding partners, we intend to identify and prioritize projects that are ready to move forward quickly.

In addition, the Department is committed to working with the Office of Policy and Management under our current programs in order to better align our available funds with the priorities of the Administration, as well as Governor Lamont's objective of going on a 'debt diet'.

The Department of Housing supports the recommended biennial budget submitted to you by Governor Lamont. I thank you for your time and I, along with members of the Department of Housing, are ready to answer any questions you may have regarding the budget before you today.