



**Testimony of Dahlia Romanow  
In Support of the Extension of Executive Order 12D:  
Post-Moratorium Requirements Related to Evictions and Notices to Quit**

Members of the Committee: thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. My name is Dahlia Romanow, and I am an attorney at the Connecticut Fair Housing Center, a civil rights organization dedicated to ensuring all of Connecticut's residents have access to the housing of their choice. I am testifying in support of **the extension of Executive Order 12D by legislative action**, either in modified form as submitted by Kiley Gosselin from the Partnership for Strong Communities or retained as originally written.

**Millions of dollars in federal emergency rental assistance have not yet been paid out by the UniteCT program.** EO 12D was explicitly written to increase the efficacy of the UniteCT program in its mission to stabilize tenancies and prevent evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic. EO 12D does this in part by requiring a longer notice period (30 days) before a landlord can start most types of eviction cases against a tenant. This has given tenants and landlords time to apply for UniteCT and other available rental assistance programs and for those applications to be processed. Many people are getting back to work and rebuilding their financial lives. Extending EO 12D also gives tenants 30 days to catch up with their rent on their own. Crucially, if a tenant is able to pay their rental arrearage within the 30-day period, they can avoid an eviction case being filed at all and ending up on their record, hurting their chances of securing housing [for years to come](#).

EO 12D also requires that eviction cases with a pending UniteCT application be stayed while the application is processed, and, if the application is approved, until the UniteCT payment is made and the case is withdrawn. EO 12D works in conjunction with UniteCT and performs the crucial function of preventing tenants from being forced from their homes while they are waiting for their UniteCT applications to be processed. **The UniteCT program is still working to process thousands of applications and distribute millions of dollars of federal emergency assistance.** According to UniteCT's payment [dashboard](#), as of February 7, 2022, the program has

still not distributed \$191,092,005, most of which are for applications already in process that have been fully or preliminarily approved.. The Department of Housing has also applied for additional federal funding and may receive a modest amount before the program closes. EO 12D should not be allowed to expire while these millions of dollars remain available to prevent eviction and help keep tenants stably housed.

**Eviction filings are approaching pre-pandemic levels.** Since the expiration of the statewide and federal eviction moratoria this summer, eviction filings have been steadily increasing. A new [report](#) from CTData reveals that statewide, landlords filed 1,232 eviction cases in December 2021, compared to 1,498 eviction cases in December 2019. In some cities, eviction filings have already surpassed pre-pandemic levels; in Hartford, for example, landlords filed 207 eviction cases in December 2021, compared to 175 in December 2019.

**Eviction in Connecticut disproportionately affects residents of color and women.** From 2017 to 2021, Black renters were over three times more likely than white renters to have an eviction case filed against them, and Hispanic/Latino renters were over two times more likely than white renters. 56% of evictions were filed against female renters, compared to only 44% against male renters. Black and Hispanic/Latina women faces highest rates of eviction, with 62% of eviction filings for Black and 59% of eviction filings for Hispanic/Latino renters against female-headed households. The expiration of EO 12D would disproportionately harm renters who are women and people of color, further entrenching patterns of discrimination and segregation in our state and contributing to unequal outcomes in [employment](#), [education](#), [health](#), and housing stability.

**The Covid-19 Pandemic is not over.** Connecticut is just recovering from the latest wave of Covid-19 in the form of the omicron variant. We do not know if or when another wave will come. Connecticut's citizens, particularly those who are elderly and immunocompromised, remain at serious risk of contracting a life-threatening illness from a highly contagious virus.

Now is not the time to prematurely end the essential protections and opportunities to access rental assistance that EO 12D provides to Connecticut renters. We urge you to extend EO 12D at least until the UniteCT program has finished distributing all its funds.