

## HB 6107

### Myths vs Facts

**Myth:** The Planning and Development Committee's proposed bills would end our local decision making on zoning and land-use.

**Fact:** This legislation empowers local communities to plan for the future.

Nothing in any proposed Planning and Development Committee bill eliminates local decision making on zoning and land-use. Instead, these changes add clarity, transparency and consistency to local zoning regulations.

- a. CT law (8-2) gives the authority to regulate land use to the 169 towns and cities in our state.
- b. These bills move CT's law, written almost 100 years ago, into the 21st century, providing tools and frameworks for municipalities to create their own goals, plans and processes.

**Myth:** HB 6107 would eliminate local control over accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

**Fact:** These bills would streamline and clarify local control over ADUs.

The current language in these bills would allow what's called "as-of-right" development of an ADU anywhere there is a single-family dwelling. As-of-right means that through public input to local zoning boards, regulations would be created and a local administrative review would assure compliance. Though public hearings will no longer be needed for an ADU that meets regulations (reducing the burden on a local homeowner's time and cost), local boards and commissions remain in control. Towns may opt out by a 2/3 vote.

**Myth:** HB 6107 would impose new, potentially costly, unfunded mandates for training and assimilating local regulations.

**Fact:** These bills will result in long term savings for our communities. Towns will not be responsible for training or code development costs.

Training - All communities benefit when commissions and boards are well trained on complex land use issues. State and regional groups are willing to provide training, which can be conducted online. Some groups are already offering training to commissioners, and many planning and zoning commissioners already volunteer for these trainings. Municipalities would not bear the burden of these costs.

Saving Tax-Payer Dollars – A state level working group would create model codes that municipalities could CHOOSE to adopt, SAVING towns the cost and the time of creating these codes themselves. These model codes will allow for design and architectural standards that will help to address concerns residents and zoning boards sometimes have with new development.

**Myth:** This bill would hurt the environment by overriding the local voice of municipalities who host waterways, open space.

**Fact:** This bill offers methods for towns to help protect the environment.

The bill recognizes the need to be proactive and provide the tools for planning so we can address changes like rising sea level that will destroy parts of our community if we don't act. Specifically, there is language to protect the Long Island Sound and its main tributaries and encourage towns to promote clean energy options, including freestanding solar and wind energy, as part of development projects.

**Myth:** This bill will take away our control over traffic flow and parking.

**Fact:** This bill enhances our ability to plan accurately and efficiently.

- a. Traffic Flow – This legislation would offer the opportunity to measure traffic flow more accurately, so our local boards can make data-driven decisions about local development. Those decisions will be made by town bodies.
- b. Parking - Parking is one of the most significant costs to building, and also seriously impacts our environment. By limiting artificially high parking minimums, towns can help to control both building costs and the environmental impact of multiple automobiles in limited space. Towns may opt out of this requirement.

**Myth:** This bill will drive up residency at a rate which outpaces the local resources and services such as police and fire, and schools.

**Fact:** This bill will help CT plan how we grow.

The latest census numbers show that CT had the 4th smallest gain in population in the US over the past decade. This slow growth is hurting our economy. The pandemic has reversed that trend giving us a new opportunity. The influx of new homeowners and residents is good for our economy. At the same time this influx threatens to drive longtime residents, our parents and our children, out of our town. This bill will help local leaders plan how our town grows, so we can meet the needs of people already here and the new residents we hope will continue to choose Connecticut as their home. Requirements for as-of-right multi-family housing around transit stations and main street / commercial corridors were removed from the bills.

**Myth:** This bill will overburden the public water and sewer infrastructure.

**Fact:** This bill will help us grow our infrastructure responsibly.

This legislation will give towns tools and guidance to plan strategically for the future, so communities can decide where they allow development and what type. A vital part of

planning is infrastructure. If we don't address septic and sewer capacity in our state, the only places that will be able to grow are where there is existing infrastructure. The Committee will work with DEEP, DPH, environmental advocates and others to assure health, safety and environmental concerns are taken into account before making any changes to regulations.

**Myth:** This bill strengthens the hands of developers who have been exploiting the state's affordable housing statute, 8-30g, to override local zoning laws.

**Fact:** Zoning reform will clarify and make more equitable the process by which the state sets its housing goals, and give towns guidance and tools to achieve those goals.

The affordable housing appeals process within 8-30g is not being amended within these proposals. Zoning and housing are definitely intertwined, and these bills actually give towns greater control over how we grow. They do not eliminate the 8-30g requirements. This bill gives towns additional tools and support in reaching an 8-30g moratorium if they have not achieved 10% affordable housing in their communities.