



State and Local Government Affairs Department
Building Homes, Enriching Communities

Housing Committee
Public Hearing
Testimony
March 3rd, 2025

To: Chairpersons Representative Antonio Felipe, Senator Martha Marx, and Members of the Housing Committee

From: Lily Weatherby, Director, State and Local Government Affairs, National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)

RE: **Raised House Bill 7113: An Act Permitting Municipalities to Establish Light-Touch Density Housing (Support with Amendments)**

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) is a national trade association that represents more than 700 state and local associations and over 140,000 home builders across the country, from small to large-size builders, who work to produce more attainable housing for communities across the country. Our association members build approximately 80% of the single-family and multi-family housing units produced every year. NAHB works to advance pro-housing policies that create more housing for individuals to achieve the American Dream of homeownership.

NAHB respectfully requests the Housing Committee to support House Bill 7113 with amendments that would lower the current proposed minimum square footage lot size requirement from 5,000 to 3,500 square feet.

HB 7113 will help alleviate the state's housing unaffordability crisis through light-touch zoning changes that will allow the construction of duplexes, fourplexes, and small apartments on a single-family zoned lot, only if water and sewer infrastructure are already available. Connecticut needs approximately 110,000 units built to meet the current housing demand.¹ With only 6,000 permits pulled in 2022, Connecticut needs legislation like HB 7113 that will add more housing stock in the state by diversifying and densifying the types of housing that can be built on existing single-family zoned lots and help alleviate the high cost of housing in Connecticut.

Allowing small multifamily buildings to be built on single-family lots can be beneficial for medium and low-income earners in Connecticut by increasing housing supply and making a wider variety of housing types available. Aside from offering affordability and lowering the cost

¹ <https://www.ctinsider.com/connecticut/article/connecticut-housing-needs-report-20060920.php>

of housing, low-density legislation can promote the creation of starter homes in the state. With the proposed amendment to HB 7113 to lower the lot square footage size requirement, NAHB believes it will help build more housing stock in the state and get more housing built in neighborhoods that are walkable to restaurants, retail, and transit.

For builders and remodelers, HB 7113 will provide additional opportunities to build and remodel more housing in communities while providing good-paying wages to residents. On average, a small-to-medium housing project employs approximately thirty individuals for the duration of the project including plumbers, electricians, carpenters, painters, engineers, etc., many of whom are local to the area.

Building housing leads to improvements in local infrastructure and provides housing stability for community members as new homes bring in additional tax revenue that can be invested into improving the local community. For example, HB 7113 can help urban counties revitalize and renew their communities by transforming underdeveloped or even abandoned areas into thriving neighborhoods by providing new opportunities to build housing such as duplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses. These new housing developments have a positive community impact as residents begin to purchase these new homes which in turn attracts additional investments from businesses who want to add in retail and restaurant options.

For municipal governments, HB 7113 reforms local zoning flexibility on previously zoned single-family lots by taking advantage of already existing water and sewer infrastructure. 169 municipalities in the state would benefit from having more housing stock built in their communities and HB 7113 would retain local autonomy in protecting the character of existing communities. Light-touch density involves smaller projects and provides an opportunity for new construction of duplexes, fourplexes, or small apartments to fit the current community.

Many municipalities rely on property tax revenues for local infrastructure to provide community services like fire, police, and certain social services. Increased housing stock can provide a municipality with a stable long-term and guaranteed source of local tax revenue, decreasing the need to increase taxes on residents to provide other beneficial community services.

For the community, HB 7113 would provide more housing opportunities to Connecticut residents and help families achieve housing stability and build generational wealth. People who own their homes are likely to get involved more in the community². Having more available housing stock in a community keeps housing costs down for individuals who want to buy or rent. Light-touch density can increase housing stock nationally to 1.3 million units in the next 3 decades.³ Across the country, cities like Seattle, San Diego, and Palisades Park have implemented low-touch density that helped them grow housing stock in their localities. For

² <https://www.lodhagroup.com/blogs/homebuyers-handbook/the-social-benefits-of-homeownership-building-stronger-communities#:~:text=Neighbourhood%20Stability%20and%20Cohesion,of%20belonging%20within%20the%20neighbourhood.>

³ <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Yimbytown-Light-touch-Density-final.pdf?x85095>

example, in San Diego, California, the implementation of light-touch density resulted in 31% more in housing stock annually, reduced housing costs by 10%, and increased property tax revenues by 21% in the city. ⁴

HB 7113 is truly a win-win for the State of Connecticut. HB 7113 will help alleviate the state's housing unaffordability crisis by allowing the construction of duplexes, fourplexes, and small apartments on a single-family zoned lot only if the lot has water and sewer resources already available. Including the reduction of minimum lot size in the state can help build more housing stock. Increased housing allows residents to live closer to their work, family, and friends while promoting a stronger sense of community and making Connecticut a premier destination to live and raise a family.

For these reasons, NAHB asks the members of the Housing Committee to Support HB 7113 and consider amending lowering the minimum lot size requirements which would address the housing unaffordability crisis by providing more options for affordable and attainable housing to people in Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in Support with Amendments to HB 7113.

⁴ <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/homeowners-and-cities-can-win-big-with-light-touch-density-301599399.html>