

Housing Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-152 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Title: HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

Vote Date: 3/5/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Change of Reference to Appropriations

PH Date: 2/17/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Housing Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This legislation seeks to allocate \$250 thousand to the Department of Housing to hire more rental home inspectors. The legislature hopes that by hiring more inspectors, there will be more efficient inspections to house renters through the Rental Assistance Program (RAP). The bill also seeks to condense the timeframe so that housing providers experience less delays throughout the inspection process.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Open Communities Alliance, Hugh Bailey, Policy Director submitted testimony in support of this legislation stating his belief that it is unacceptable for a state with as many resources as Connecticut to see the levels of homelessness that it has experienced in recent years. He is of the opinion that the state must spend what is necessary to keep people off the streets and prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place. Hugh stated that more inspectors would lead to more timely inspections, which would then help people move into their homes faster.

CT Property Owners Alliance, Bob De Cosmo, President submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting this bill deals with the state version of Section-8, a federal program. He notes that communication between the provider and some inspectors is difficult, with a

lack of phone or emailing ability. He adds that relying on faxing as the sole method of communication is difficult and days go by often without any response. He and the alliance support a working group with both sides at the table suggesting how to better the program. He believes the current system needs improvements, as both sides are generally unhappy with how the program works.

Donna DellaCamera submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that it will ensure inspections are conducted in a timely manner and efficiently. She believes that the bill will lead to residents being able to secure housing more quickly while landlords would be able to lease without experiencing prolonged vacancy periods. She adds that this legislation will expand access to safe, stable housing to those who need it most.

Franklin Communities, Joanna Marchitto, Regional Property Manager submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that the current inspection process creates delays that create serious and unnecessary barriers to housing stability. She notes that the current process leaves approved applicants waiting, while housing providers are placed in a difficult position of holding vacant units without certainty. She adds that in a competitive market, this can lead to qualified families losing their opportunity at safe housing. She believes that currently, the obstacle is the speed of the inspection process. She stated that faster turnaround leads to families moving into housing more quickly, reduces preventable vacancy loss, and improves the overall effectiveness of the Rental Assistance Program (RAP). She believes this legislation strengthens housing stability, supports participating property owners, and ensures that public assistance dollars are being deployed efficiently.

Franklin Communities, Jessica Marston, Leasing Administrator submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that the shortage of full-time inspectors has led to significant delays before required inspections could be completed. During those delays, apartments sit vacant while approved applicants are unable to move in. She notes that these delays create hardship for families and create difficulties for housing providers to hold units without certainty about when inspections will occur. She notes the \$250 thousand appropriation would lead to improved efficiency in the inspection process, help residents move into their homes more quickly and reduce unnecessary vacancies for property owners. She believes this legislation strengthens the overall effectiveness of the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) and expands access to safe and stable housing for individuals and families that depend on them.

CTAA, Katrina Mattern, Senior Property Manager submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that it allows more inspectors, thereby helping housing providers get residents in need to housing faster. She noted that inspectors are often busy with routine inspections and annual renewals and move ins can take extra time to get on their schedule. She adds that offering financial support to organizations provides a direct benefit to housing providers and residents.

CTCIP, Kate Mazzotta, Policy & Research Advisor submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting the positive impact it would have on children with incarcerated parents. She noted increasing full-time staff to inspect the compliance of housing units would streamline the approval process for Rental Assistance Program (RAP) applicants.

HBRA of CT, Jim Perras, CEO submitted testimony in support of this legislation stating that proactive inspection capacity ensures the quality and safety of rental housing stock, protects vulnerable tenants, and increases effectiveness of rental assistance. He believes that inspections give confidence to renters and developers that units receiving public support meet health and safety standards, which can encourage responsible investment in rental housing. Jim notes that this legislation is an investment that supports housing stability and complements broader production efforts by maintaining trust in housing programs.

Connecticut Legal Services, Inc., Raphael Podolsky, Attorney and Policy Advocate submitted testimony in support of the legislation noting that there are sometimes delays in obtaining an inspection, or if necessary, reinspection. He notes that unnecessary delays are a concern for both the tenant and landlord. He believes that the bill would have the practical effect of accelerating inspections, re-inspections, and apartment approvals. He stated that he supports the legislation with the understanding that there would be no changes to the existing rule that a tenant with a Rental Assistance Program (RAP) certificate cannot occupy the apartment until identified violations have been corrected.

CTAA, Dondre Roberts, Member submitted testimony on this legislation noting that it ensures participating units are inspected in a timely and consistent manner, in a way that benefits all parties involved. He notes that adequate staffing helps avoid backlogs and provides clarity for property owners working to comply with state and local standards. He believes this legislation improves efficiency, accountability, and confidence in the Rental Assistance Program (RAP).

CT Coalition of Property Owners, John Souza, President submitted testimony in support of this legislation if funds within it are used to speed up the timeframe of when tenants apply for apartments and inspections are required. He notes that no housing provider likes losing money for delayed inspections, he believes that it makes it less likely the housing provider will consider a person with a housing certificate when dealing with long delays. He stated that "we housing providers sell time and when it's gone, we can't get paid for it."

Franklin Communities, Leah Zerrouki, Rental Consultant submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that this legislation ensures quicker processing and timely apartment inspections which will help residents move in without unnecessary delays, while also supporting housing providers who need efficient inspections to keep units occupied and in compliance. She notes this legislation will benefit everyone involved and strengthen the effectiveness of the program.

The following submitted general support for the bill:

James Armstrong

Homes with Hope, Carmen Ayala, Director of Diversion Services

Rita Clarke

New Reach, Kellyann, CEO

Franklin Communities, Steven Lopes, CFO

Guildford Planning & Zoning Commission, Larry Rizzolo, Commissioner

The following submitted testimony noting that delays lead to operational difficulties for approved applicants and can lead to missed housing opportunities. They believe that the

\$250 thousand appropriation ensures that inspections are efficient, enables housing providers to lease units without prolonged vacancy periods, improves the program's overall effectiveness and expands access to safe and stable housing to those who need it most:

Janice Miner

Lauren Tagliatela

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Cynthia Steckler submitted testimony in opposition to this legislation stating her belief that subsidies only cause rent prices to increase, create unfair competition for middle- and working-class renters. She believes this legislation enables bad tenancy and legislative policy.

The following submitted general opposition to the bill:

Keva Fothergill

Wendy Irving

Edward Isenburg

Anonymous, Anonymous

Anonymous, Anonymous

Anonymous, Anonymous

Anonymous, Anonymous

Anonymous, Anonymous

Reported by: Tyler Fisher

Date: 03/20/2026