

Housing Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-339 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT ALLOWING LONG-TERM RENTAL OF BEDROOMS IN A SINGLE-FAMILY HOME AS OF RIGHT.

Title: FAMILY HOME AS OF RIGHT.

Vote Date: 3/5/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/3/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Housing Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This legislation seeks to permit long-term rentals in single-family homes. With housing and rental costs continuing to rise, constituents across the state are having issues finding affordable housing. The legislature hopes that this bill will prove beneficial to both renter's and tenants alike. For homeowners, the bill would allow for them to determine whether they would like to rent a room in their home without municipal involvement. For renters, it would provide an alternative, more affordable form of housing, as a room rental is generally a cheaper housing alternative than renting a condo or apartment. The committee hopes this bill will add more affordable housing options in the state of Connecticut.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Marie Bravo submitted testimony sharing that she was shocked to learn as a homeowner, she has no say in who can live in her home without having to get a permit and go through weeks of waiting. She adds that people need homes and homeowners should decide who lives in their homes without asking their municipality for permission.

AIA Connecticut Gina Calabro, CEO submitted testimony in support of this legislation saying that Connecticut is experiencing a housing shortage and that the state must pursue

practical solutions that expand access to housing while supporting affordability. She says that home sharing has been a common and practical housing arrangement, but many communities have outdated regulations or restrictions that limit or prohibit it. Gina believes two groups are particularly impacted by today's housing market: young adults and seniors. She states that for young professionals, renting a room in an existing home provides a flexible and affordable option while they establish themselves financially and professionally. She says that nearly 40% of seniors experience housing cost burdens, with many living alone. She believes that allowing homeowners to rent a bedroom can provide additional income, reduce housing costs, and offer companionship to support aging in place. She thinks that this legislation is an important step in addressing Connecticut's housing shortage while allowing homeowners to make better use of existing housing and generate supplemental income.

Pacific Legal Foundation, Jaimie Cavanaugh, Senior State Policy Counsel submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that the constitutional rights of homeowners are respected by protecting their freedom to choose their household companions. She believes that laws that prohibit homeowners from leasing rooms not only deprive them of their rights but also contributes to high costs, and fewer options for renters. She states that many people are only able to make housing investments in their communities and achieve homeownership if they're able to share their homes with others. She states that renting is often a first step to saving for homeownership but can also be a long-term solution as well.

Irene Corsaro submitted testimony in general support of the legislation noting that 40% of Connecticut households with an adult over the age of 65 face housing expenses greater than 30% of their household income. She shared that many of these seniors are empty nesters, while some are widowed or single and struggle to find affordable housing. She believes that this legislation would be a lifeline for citizens that want and need a live-in companion that will share expenses, aid in mutual care and safety concerns, and provide comfort and companionship.

Nicole Eaddy submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that allowing seniors to share their homes reduces isolation and provides valuable social connection. She believes it is important to adopt policies that make better use of existing homes that supports sustainable and livable communities for residents of all ages, while respecting the needs of older adults.

Therese Eke submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that Connecticut residents cost burdened, with seniors struggling and everyone dealing with social isolation.

Linda Endo submitted testimony noting that Connecticut residents, renters and homeowners are both cost burdened. She states that this bill adheres to public health codes and does not impact enforcement of local health and safety codes.

Matt Lazell-Fairman submitted testimony noting his belief that this legislation is for those who may not be able to afford housing and those who may appreciate the companionship and support of having a roommate. He shares that he was disabled at a young age before building up savings and working to accrue disability earnings. He stated that without familial support, he would have struggled to find affordable housing. He believes that by limiting room

sharing, towns reduce supply of available housing to the most vulnerable. He also says that this legislation would benefit both parties, as room rental increases the financial security of homeowners and makes housing more affordable for renters.

Partnership for Strong Communities Alysha Gardner, Senior Policy Analyst submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that post-Covid, homes that have appreciated in price now face dramatically higher property taxes due to reassessments. She states that inflation and supply chain issues have raised prices on housing construction and necessities. She says that adults over 50 are the fastest growing demographic of homeless individuals. She believes this bill would decrease costs for tenants and homeowners and provide flexibility so that Connecticut families can stay in their homes and grow in their communities.

RiverCOG, Samuel Gold, Executive Director submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that empty bedrooms are opportunities for affordable housing. He stated that there are additional benefits for older individuals living alone like assistance maintaining their home, shoveling snow, and moving their lawn, as well as quelling the pandemic of loneliness. He believes it is important to add a right of tenants to sublet bedrooms in their leased spaces with the permission of their landlord, to accommodate roommate arrangements.

Ashley Gulyas submitted testimony in support of this legislation sharing that this legislation would have been financially helpful for her and her husband to rent out a room in their home prior to starting their family. She believes this bill is mutually beneficial and would have helped her and her husband pay off their mortgage, while also giving a young professional stable housing while saving for a more permanent place to live. She thinks this bill would create opportunities for young people and seniors.

CT Chapter of American Planning Association, John Guskowski, Government Relations Officer submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that the CCAPA does not believe there is a silver bullet to solve Connecticut's housing crisis, but a combination of market incentives, zoning reforms, and permitting diverse housing options. He believes this legislation is a step in the right direction for affordability and housing variety.

Institute for Justice, Samuel Hooper, Legislative Counsel submitted testimony in support of this legislation stating his opinion that arbitrary occupancy limits reduce the number of available units which worsens affordability. He notes that many elderly and low-income individuals rely on shared housing arrangements to afford rent. Samuel says that occupancy limits and familial based restrictions have historically been used to exclude students, low-income renters, and others. He believes that property owners should have the right to rent or share their home without arbitrary restrictions or government intrusion. He believes this bill restores property rights and promotes free-market housing solutions while also encouraging housing growth, competition, and affordability.

Pew Charitable Trusts, Tushar Kansal, Senior Officer submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that the bill would permit more efficient use of existing homes by allowing property owners to rent out rooms to tenants. He notes that the number of empty bedrooms has increased in recent years even as the housing shortage has worsened. He believes that this legislation would make housing affordable for low-income renters. He also thinks that this legislation could reduce rental costs and prevent homelessness.

Pro-Homes CT, Nick Kantor, Program Director submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that too many seniors are on fixed incomes and struggle to maintain their big and empty homes, while first time homebuyers can't afford homes due to costly monthly payments at high interest rates. Nick states that renting a bedroom was once 10% of the rental stock in some cities. He believes that a lack of standard makes it difficult for homeowners and renters to navigate an arbitrary system. He advises the committee to consider four amendments under section 11. The first is to include language to ban municipalities from requiring familial or blood relations to rent a room. The second, was to include language to establish "as of right approval". The third was for language to be added to clarify that rentals fall under and cannot exceed existing building and fire codes of single-family homes. Lastly, he wants to call on the Department of Housing to update model lease agreement.

CT Citizen Action Group, Natasha Kuranko submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that it is mutually beneficial for the tenant and the homeowner. She notes that tenants tend to be students and that this legislation would expand the middle of low-cost housing to make going to school in Connecticut financially possible. She also stated that homeowners benefit by getting assistance through rent to pay mortgage payments, property taxes, utilities, or upkeep.

Leala Marlin submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that the rapid expansion of large luxury multifamily projects while others have been neglected has led to an imbalance. She says that imbalance has reduced the availability of starter homes, reasonably priced condos, townhomes and other which provided residents an attainable entry point into the housing market. She adds that the number of unhoused seniors in Fairfield County increased by 21% from 2023 to 2024. She believes this legislation would expand affordable housing options, allow seniors to age in place with supplemental income, provide more rental opportunities for renters, and make better use of existing housing stock. She also emphasizes that this legislation maintains fire, health, and safety protections so that housing arrangements remain safe and properly regulated.

Casey Moran submitted testimony in support of this legislation sharing how their grandmother was able to rent out part of her home because she was grandfathered in. They state that if their grandmother was a little younger, then she likely would have lost her ability to maintain stable housing. She believes this legislation would restore private property rights and be a nuisance to no one.

People Friendly Stamford, Zachary Oberholtzer submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that it is mutually beneficial for renters and homeowners. Believes this bill will allow more people to gracefully age in place while also supplementing their income to offset high maintenance costs and property taxes. He notes that it can also help new homeowners offset their high mortgage costs of purchasing a new home. On the other hand, Zachary believes that this legislation will create additional affordable housing without needing to build or retrofit existing buildings. Zachary adds that single bedrooms are typically cheaper and easier for low-income or temporary workers to lease than other options.

WestCOG, Francis Pickering, Executive Director submitted testimony in support of this testimony noting that the legislation does not alter traditional land use dimensions. They note

that this legislation is efficient for the housing supply as the space is already built, infrastructure is already in place, the environmental footprint already exists, creates no permitting backlog, and there is no public capital investment necessary. Francis believes this legislation creates naturally occurring affordability. They state a rented bedroom will cost less than an apartment or condo. They note it provides an accessible entry point into stable housing for individuals who cannot afford, or may not want, a standalone unit. They believe that even if there is a modest percentage of homeowners who comply with this, the aggregate impact could be meaningful. They continue pointing out that this legislation is permissive, not mandatory and maintains existing enforcement of local health, safety and nuisance codes and ordinances.

Friendship Service Center, Caitlin Rose, Chief Executive Officer submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting that adults over the age of 55 are the fastest growing population within their homelessness response system. She notes that many of these individuals live on a fix income and it's hard and often inadequate in meeting the cost of living. She states that it's not just seniors who are impacted by the housing crisis. She said if there's no need for government inference in a business agreement as it relates to Just Cause eviction protections, why is allowance of interference in a business agreement allowed?

AARP Connecticut, Natalie Shurtleff, Associate State Director, Advocacy and Community Outreach submitted testimony in support of the legislation noting that as the state's population grows, housing needs have shifted. She notes that allowing home sharing would be a win-win solution. She stated that homeowners would have an extra source of income and renters would have access to lower-cost, long-term housing options. She also pointed out that there is an additional benefit of reducing social isolation and mutually beneficial support.

Sustainable Streets Norwalk, Matthew Silber submitted testimony in support of this legislation stating it would be a lifeline to empty-nesters who want to maintain a source of income to address rising property taxes, while also providing essential housing options to populations in Connecticut that are vital contributors to the state's economy. He believes beliefs this legislation would remove local restrictions are unfounded. He stated that the legislation would make it easier for people to find housing appropriate to their circumstances and allow property owners to utilize their homes in a manner that benefits them.

Deborah Stein submitted testimony stating that in her experience with Glastonbury Friends of Housing, the need for affordable housing has been one of the most prevalent and intractable problems for older adults and others in Connecticut. She states that most older people want to remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible but costs, especially on a retirement income, can make that prohibitive. She believes this legislation could help people at various stages in life and help with high housing costs, sharing chores, and companionship. She emphasizes that this legislation could be readily implemented to address the housing supply and affordability crisis.

City of New Haven, Carolina Tanbee Smith, Alder submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting it modestly expands housing options across Connecticut. She believes this bill allows homeowners to make reasonable use of the homes they live in. She stated that seniors, young professionals, and more are looking for flexible, affordable living arrangements. While homeowners are seeking ways to offset rising property taxes and cost

of living. She notes that as an elected official, there need to be more tools to responsibly expand housing supply. She believes this legislation promotes affordability and strengthens community stability.

City of Norwalk, Anne Wennerstrand, City Council Member submitted testimony in support of this legislation noting her personal experience working with constituents, typically seniors who are concerned about housing stability, affordability, and fear of displacement as they age. She says that many older residents in Norwalk live on fixed incomes and want the ability to remain safely and affordably in their homes. She believes that stability is increasingly fragile, as they face rising costs which creates constant stress. She stated that at this stage in their life, displacement can be destabilizing to their health, well-being, and community connection. She believes this legislation affirms the basic principle that seniors deserve stability and predictability in housing. She adds that many seniors want the option to share their home but face confusing or inconsistent local regulations. She points out this legislation would provide flexibility that can be the difference between a senior being able to stay in their home or being forced to leave. She notes that in Norwalk, a proposal like this is fiscally responsible, as it prevents displacement and housing insecurity, thereby reducing strain on healthcare and social services and emergency housing resources.

Anonymous, Anonymous: This individual submitted testimony in support of the legislation emphasizing the importance of companionship of living with likeminded friends and helping each other with their various handicaps. They also shared that this legislation would allow them to share expenses, enjoy meals and enjoy their neighborhood.

Anonymous, Anonymous: This individual submitted testimony noting the positive and negative implications, as they see it, of adopting this legislation. They note that this legislation could help homeowners, especially seniors and families on fixed incomes. They also stated that this legislation would expand housing options without building new structures. They believe that this legislation creates a statewide shall not rule which removes local zoning tools that exist to address the needs of individual towns. They believe that the burden should be on the state to demonstrate why a one-size rule is necessary everywhere and what safeguards would exist for communities with differing conditions. They advise the committee to amend the legislation to allow simple administrative registration, owner-occupancy verification, and health and safety standards so room rentals can happen without stripping towns of their accountability tools.

The following submitted general support for the bill:

**Sustainable Streets Norwalk, Christina Randall
Jerome Silber**

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

CT Realtors, Jim Heckman, General Counsel submitted testimony in opposition to this legislation noting that this bill would allow single family homes to operate as a multi-family home without compliance of municipal requirements. He states that this legislation could lead to property owners renting out spaces in their home, though those spaces were not designed for residential occupancy. He notes that rooming houses which permits unrelated individuals to live together is different, as they conform to licensing, zoning, and habitability standards, which he believes are not accounted for in this legislation.

Eric Smith submitted testimony in opposition to this legislation noting that it could create too much incentive to operate as a boarding house. He advises the committee to consider allowing a single bedroom to be rented for a minimum of six months, to provide rental space and allow the owner to gain income without opening Pandora's box. He stated in zoning, there's often a problem with creating pre-existing uses and regretting the decision later.

The following submitted general opposition to the bill:

Joseph Braunstein

Mo Lev

Parc at Glenbrook, Jose Llanos, Property Manager

Reported by: Tyler Fisher

Date: 3/17/2026