

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Connecticut Legal Assistance1-800-413-7796
- Consumer Protection1-800-842-2649
- Unclaimed Property Hotline.....1-800-833-7318
- CT Tax Department.....1-860-297-5962
- Veterans' Benefits and Information.....1-800-827-1000
- ConnPACE1-800-423-5026
- Medicare Hotline1-800-633-4227
- CT Partnership for Long-Term Care1-800-547-3443
- Infoline.....211
- CT Department of Veterans Affairs1-800-550-0000
- CHOICES.....1-800-944-9422
- Healthcare Advocate.....1-866-HMO-4446
- DSS Elder Services1-866-218-6631
- Dept. of Insurance Consumer Affairs ...1-800-203-3447
- Norwalk Housing Authority..... 203-838-8471
- Norwalk Fair Housing203-854-7820
- Norwalk Fair Rent.....203-854-7989

Provided by Representative Bruce V. Morris
1-800-842-8267
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2007 Housing Update

Representative Bruce V. Morris
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State Representative Bruce V. Morris



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Dear Neighbors and Friends,

One of my top priorities as your legislator is to promote awareness and understanding of the laws we pass here at the Capitol.

I am sending this update to keep you abreast of the most recent housing laws passed. Please feel free to contact my office with your ideas and concerns. I appreciate your active participation in the legislative process. It is important you know that your voices count and have been heard.

Some have also called my office for help with a variety of problems. Please note that I am here to assist you. It is rewarding to work with (and for) the many individuals of Norwalk's 140th District.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding any business before the General Assembly, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at my legislative office at (800) 842-8267 or by e-mail: Bruce.Morris@cga.ct.gov.

Sincerely,

Rep. Bruce V. Morris
140th District of Norwalk



Representative Bruce V. Morris
Legislative Office Building, Room 4054
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

EMINENT DOMAIN

In June of 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the City of New London could use state eminent domain laws to take privately owned property in furtherance of its economic revitalization plan even though the property would be used for private development (Kelo v. City of New London, 125 S. Ct. 2655).



Public Act 07-141 reforms the procedures by which property may be taken under Connecticut's eminent domain laws. This legislation will enhance protections for real property owners whose properties are threatened by eminent domain. Public Act 07-141 says that properties may no longer be taken "for the primary purpose of increasing local tax revenue." Detailed development plans must explain why the taking is necessary. The plan must include the above information and must also include details on: (1) infrastructure improvements, (2) aesthetic improvements and blight mitigation, (3) how the plan helps property values, (4) how the resident's standard of living will be improved, and (5) how the town's competitiveness will be affected.



HOUSING FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

In an effort to reduce sprawl in our cities and towns and to encourage smart growth, we have enacted a Housing for Economic Growth Program. The program allows municipalities to establish Incentive Housing Zones. Municipalities that do so will be eligible for a variety of grants from the state. These housing zones must provide for housing in the same area as transit facilities and other complementary uses which already exist. They can be zoned for entirely residential use or a mix of residential units with stores, offices, and other uses. Residential units can be single or multi-family, but at least 20% must be affordable for low and moderate income people.

TRANSITIONARY RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The demand for rental assistance subsidies often exceeds availability, and thus leads to the establishment of a lottery to select families for participation. This legislation gives higher priority for a rental subsidy to families who have lost their cash assistance eligibility due to time limits instead of families who wish to leave the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) voluntarily. By law, the transitional rental assistance program provides up to 12 months of rental assistance for private housing to people leaving the (TFA) program who either have income that exceeds the TFA benefit (\$543 per month for a family of three living in most parts of the state) or who work at least 12 hours per week.



ALLOCATION OF PRIVATE ACTIVITY BONDS FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING

This bill requires the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to use 10% of its annual private activity bond allocation for multifamily residential housing in 2008 and 15% thereafter. Private activity bonds (also known as industrial development bonds) are issued by quasi-public authorities and municipalities. These bonds are backed by private borrowers who paid the debt service and are federally tax-exempt in many cases.

This bill also requires CHFA's board of directors to review the authority's multifamily housing goals and programs to determine how it can increase production and promote preservation, including housing for people with incomes (1) less than 50% of the area median income and (2) less than 25% of the area median income. The report will be due to the General Assembly on January 1, 2008.