



**Support for SB 1057: Connecticut Housing Program for
Economic Growth
Comments submitted by Barbara Brockhurst, Housing Specialist**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut, comprised of over 2,400 members across the state, supports measures to increase the supply of affordable housing. The LWVCT supports the passage of SB1057 for two principle reasons. One, it represents a necessary supplement to existing legislation that will increase the construction of housing that is affordable to young professionals and traditionally blue collar workers. Secondly, it offers incentives to construct housing that is consistent with limiting sprawl and preserving open space. The current situation with regard to both of these issues is, we believe, detrimental to the quality of life in our state.

Many of us have first hand experience with the explosive growth in the cost of housing that has occurred in recent years and are alarmed with its implications for future growth. Our own children starting out in the workforce, and workers we rely on to perform essential services are unable to afford housing in our towns and must commute from long distances or leave the state altogether. The loss of young people 25-34 years old from our state since 2000 has recently been documented and is ominous with regard to future economic development. Increasingly, we have friends who are personally threatened by the lack of affordable housing and are very concerned that our children, once left, will not return.

Single family houses built on ample lots continue to attract those who are able to afford them but we are running out of land to build on. We are concerned that our communities are losing their rural character and saddened by the loss of so many of our farms. This pattern of development is also recognized as being destructive to our ecosystems and particularly, to the quality of our waterways and ultimately to our supply of fresh water. We therefore recognize the wisdom of higher density housing which SB 1057 supports by providing financial incentives to towns that elect to zone accordingly.

Following initial state investment, SB 1057 is expected to pay for itself through tax revenues from wage earners who buy the constructed housing units. This bill thus appears to be fiscally responsible as well as beneficial to our economic growth and to the preservation of our quality of life. It is also voluntary and unlikely to generate resentment from municipalities. The LWVCT therefore strongly supports SB 1057 and we urge you to vote for its enactment.