



## **Testimony In Support Of House Bill 5204: An Act Concerning A Needs Assessment And Fair Share Plans For Municipalities To Increase Affordable Housing**

**Rabera Sharon, Program Officer for Health Justice  
Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut  
March 10, 2022**

Chairs and members of the Planning and Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5204: An Act Concerning a Needs Assessment and Fair Share Plans for Municipalities to Increase Affordable Housing on behalf of Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut.

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut's mission is to accelerate the movement for health justice for everybody because health is a human right and core to social justice and equity. Our work is part of a broader movement for social and economic justice.

We know that social determinants of health – where people live, work, play – have a huge impact on people's life outcomes. We are supporting this bill because access to affordable housing influences Connecticut residents' health and life outcomes.

### **Why increasing affordable housing is important**

Our state is segregated, and racial disparities are glaring. Data Haven, a data-focused nonprofit, has put together a series of reports on the well-being of people in Connecticut. These reports illustrate stark health differences between people living in cities and in suburbs. Your zip code determines whether you are likely to suffer from obesity, diabetes, asthma and other respiratory disease, and premature death. It also determines how long you live.

Too many families in our state are trapped in cycles of poverty in part due to segregationist housing practices that undermine growth and development. These unjust policies and Connecticut's history of disinvestment and structural barriers have held back hundreds of Connecticut residents.

Increasing affordable housing enables everyone to have more choices about where they live, which is essential to improving health outcomes for all Connecticut residents.

## **Conclusion**

We urge you to pass this bill out of committee, as this proposal not only take steps to end housing segregation, and address equity issues, it impacts health outcomes for the better. As an organization that believes health and health care is a human right, we see this proposal as one way we can address those social determinants of health that impact our well-being.

Thank you for your consideration.