



February 20, 2024

Dear Housing Committee Co-Chairs Senator Moore and Representative Khan, Ranking Members Senator Sampson and Representative Scott, and honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Maryam Elahi, I am the President & CEO of the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. I am writing to strongly advocate for the expansion of Just Cause protections to renters in Connecticut through the passage of *S.B. 143- An Act Concerning Evictions for Cause*. Just Cause legislation is imperative in safeguarding the well-being of our state's most vulnerable populations, particularly children who are disproportionately affected by the devastating consequences of eviction.

The rise in evictions after the COVID pandemic has had an outsized impact on children, causing significant disruptions in their lives and leaving them vulnerable to a myriad of challenges. Eviction not only separates families and disrupts many aspects of life but also leaves children worrying about where they will sleep, if they will have enough to eat, and if they will be forced to stay somewhere unsafe. The detrimental effects of eviction on children's health, education, and mental well-being are profound and long-lasting.

Children rely on stability and predictability, especially in their home environment, to thrive and develop. The sudden upheaval caused by eviction threatens their sense of safety and security, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and behavioral challenges.

Eviction disproportionately impacts Black and Latine children and their mothers. Additionally, families with low incomes that include young children face constrained housing choices, making them more vulnerable to eviction and housing instability. This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and housing insecurity that has far-reaching consequences for generations to come.

Expanding Just Cause protections is not only a matter of housing justice but also an important step toward ending child poverty. By ensuring housing security for renters, regardless of age or demographics, we can create a more equitable and prosperous future for our state.

I urge you to prioritize the passage of *S.B. 143- An Act Concerning Evictions for Cause* to expand just cause protections to a greater share of renters in Connecticut. Let us take decisive action to protect the well-being of our children and build a more inclusive and compassionate society.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Maryam Elahi
President & CEO
Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut

Board of Trustees

Margaret O'Shea, *Chair*
Nicholas Fortson, *Vice Chair*
Sandy Hale, *Treasurer*
Carol Williams, *Secretary*

Joe DeLong
Lee-Ann Gomes
Leah Hartman
Izaskun Larrañeta
Catherine Marrison

Michael Rauh
Barbara Sahagan
Leah Schad
Morgan Tuck

Maryam Elahi,
President & CEO
maryam@cfect.org