

March 14, 2023

Vermont Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

Hon. Chair Senator Christopher Bray, Vice-Chair Anne Watson, Senator Mark MacDonald, Senator Dick McCormack, and Senator Becca White:

RE: S.100 Senate Omnibus Housing Bill

My name is Christopher Trombly, I am from South Burlington, and I am a pro-homes advocate. As someone who cares deeply about Vermont's present and future, I urge you to vote in favor of S.100 aka Housing; land use; municipal zoning; Act 250; Human Rights Commission bill.

This kind of incremental change legalizes diverse housing types for a diverse population and is playing the long game matched with \$90mm in appropriations for urgent housing programs. Vermont is falling behind the country and perpetuating our homeownership-wealth gap. Directing more housing to our areas with the necessary infrastructure encourages more infill and dense housing while avoiding further sprawl.

Duplex and Quadplex

In my neighborhood, our zoning rules formerly allowed for up to 4 units per acre. This flexibility made it possible for a duplex to be added to our neighborhood of single-family homes. Now, two families live there and we have more kids in the neighborhood. A wonderful example of gentle infill. This was built on an underutilized lot and did not infringe on riparian connections, wildlife corridors, forest, or within our expanded wetland buffers.

However, these rules were changed limiting housing to only 1 unit per acre for smaller lots, despite having access to municipal water/storm services, on the bus line, and within 2 miles of several large employers, including childcare, deli, gym, laser surgery, tech company, accounting office and a satellite location for UVM medical center which is posed for expansion to host a surgical center.

S.100 would re-open that door to homeownership at a lower price point while preserving our natural resources to keep Vermont cool. Let's give non-profits the flexibility they need to build they very type of housing needed to improve access to homeownership.

Municipal Water/ Sewer

There are no elements of this bill that would override South Burlington's Article 12 which allows for enhanced environmental protections. The letter from the city of South Burlington does not contest this and cite capacity concerns. Absent additional

information, I hesitate to endorse delegated authority out of concern it could be used to exercise exclusionary policies this bill seeks to address.

Summary

Vermont's future depends on all our towns and cities developing in a way that is accessible and affordable for current and future residents with different backgrounds, lifestyles, and income. We need the right type of human habitat at the right time in our neighbors' lives. We need to be there for them during times of hardship, or when they are starting a new life in a new country, starting a new family, or they are in their golden years. But we can't get there without action. We need you to pass S.100 as introduced to ensure that this vision for the future can start today.

Thank you for your consideration,

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CC:

Sen Ram-Hinsdale, Sen Lyon, Sen Chittenden, Rep Hyman