



Legislative Testimony  
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**Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 6948, An Act Concerning the Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Record on Housing Opportunities**

Hello Senator Marx, Representative Felipe, and all the other distinguished members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Terri Ricks, I am a resident of Hartford and a Smart Justice Leader with the ACLU of Connecticut. I am a person who has been directly impacted by homelessness due to housing challenges. I am an individual who is here speaking and fighting for change even when I lived for three-and-a-half years in a hotel due to housing challenges. Every day has been a fight, but nothing has been a fight as tough as being freed from prison in 2005. After completing changing my life, housing has consistently been a problem that even eludes me to this day. I am here strongly asking for your support for HB 6948, An Act Concerning the Collateral Consequences of Criminal Records on Housing Opportunities.

One of the most challenging and difficult obstacles that people face is housing discrimination. No matter how many years have gone by, no matter how qualified a person may be, no matter their credit score, people should never be denied a place to build a foundation to be a thriving part of their community. This makes individuals who have rebuilt their lives feel that the door continues to be slammed in their faces. Giving an opportunity to people who have done their time and paid their debt to society and have continued to show positive growth since they've been home should have a right, not the luck of the draw. And giving people the opportunity is a risky proposition, nor is it a favor from anyone, it is a unified right. The risk falls within not allowing people to have a second opportunity at integration back into their

communities and show that they can be law-abiding citizens. This act begins the process of helping individuals find safe and secure housing. I've been in a fight for survival, but it's not about me. I'm in this fight to save lives. HB 6948 is about the fight for survival for each and everyone affected by the collateral consequences of living with a criminal record. So once again, I respectfully ask and urge the members of the Housing Committee to support HB 6948 to give people who are doing the right thing a true opportunity.

Thank you for listening to my testimony and I welcome any questions you may have.