



**HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION
OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

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*Your Home
Is Our
Business*

2023 LEGISLATIVE WRAP UP REPORT

OVERVIEW

The 2023 session began with all eyes on housing. Acknowledging the growing housing accessibility and affordability crisis leaders of both the House and Senate identified their intentions to pursue radical reforms in days leading up to the start of the 2023 session. And on the first day of session the Governor joined the fray by making housing a key component of his State of the Union Address.

Despite long, arduous public hearings and committee debates on topics like rent control, and land use reforms like Fair Share and Transit Oriented Development, progressive advocates failed to advance any major reforms.

HBRA-CT and its partners fended off many bills that, if enacted, would have negatively impacted our members, and significantly increased the cost of doing business in Connecticut. Examples of bills that were defeated this year include, but are not limited to:

- Mandatory electrification of new construction and substantial remodels.
- Voluntary municipal stretch codes and other bills that would have circumvented our code adoption process.
- New conveyance taxes.
- New statewide property taxes.
- Costly new inclusionary zoning mandates.
- General contractor liability for subcontractor/employee wage disputes.
- Numerous bills infringing on landlord/tenant relations, including:
 - Multiple rent control/ stabilization measures.
 - Mandating home energy labeling for rental units.
 - Moratorium on winter evictions.
 - Restrictions on towing of improperly parked cars.

Special thanks to **Lisa Fecke** and the team at **Gaffney Bennett & Associates** for their hard work and vigilance. As always, we extend our sincere gratitude to **Government Affairs Committee Chair, Bob Wiedenmann** for the countless hours and guidance he has given as the HBRA develops and executes its policy initiatives. The association and our industry owe Bob a debt of gratitude. Lastly, thank you to all who when called upon, called and e-mailed legislators, submitted testimony or testified before legislative committees. Without your grassroots advocacy, there is no doubt that outcomes would have been different. And thank you to all who participated

on our Government Affairs Committee. Your participation shaped our policies and objectives this session and overall strengthened HBRA advocacy efforts.

Enjoy this review of the 2023 Legislative Session. If you have any questions or if there is anything that you would like me to expand upon, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

BUDGET IMPACTS TO OUR INDUSTRY

Altogether, the budget includes more than \$800 million in housing programs, enough to assist in the purchase of 1,250 homes and generate thousands of new units, according to the governor's office.

HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS

- **\$150 million for Time-to-Own program (forgivable downpayment assistance).**
- **\$200 million for Workforce Housing Production.**
- **\$200 million for the state's Housing Trust Fund.**

BONDING HIGHLIGHTS

- \$100 Million to DOH: For housing development and rehabilitation (Not more than \$30 million to be used for moderate housing units on the CHFA state housing portfolio).
- \$30 Million to DECD: To fund its Brown Field Remediation program.
- \$25 Million to DECD: To fund public drinking water projects.
- \$25 Million to DOH: To fund the Housing Receivership Revolving Fund.
- \$75 Million to DEEP: To fund the Housing Environmental Improvement Revolving Loan Fund.
- \$15 Million to DSS: To fund grant-in-aid programs for supportive housing for the intellectually disabled.

HBRAC PRIORITY LEGISLATION

- **(Supported) [SB 1](#): AAC TRANSPARENCY IN EDUCATION.** This omnibus education bill includes language recommended by the HBRA that creates a High School Pre-Apprenticeship Grant program modeled after a successful Colorado program that incentivizes schools that include certified pre-apprenticeship programs in their curriculum. This bill essentially helps to bring shop class back to our public schools.
- **(Supported) [SB 948](#): AA ADDING CERTAIN MEMBERS TO THE GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL.** This bill was initiated by the HBRA and will require that the Governor appoint an expert in residential construction to the Governor's Workforce Council ensuring that our industry is at the table when workforce development policies and expenditures are determined at the state level.
- **(Supported some sections and Opposed others) SB 998: This bill as amended became the vehicle for the omnibus housing bill ([Read the summary here](#)).** Some highlights include:
 - Increased fines for housing violations.
 - Limits on rental application fees.
 - Limits on rent late charges.
 - Reduces time landlords have to return security deposits from 30 to 21 days.
 - Establishes the Office of Responsible Growth within OPM.

- Requires OPM to create a Fair Share Allocation Methodology and to assess each town's share (But eliminated mandate for towns to create more housing).
- Adopts HBRA language from [SB 1001](#) to increase DPH oversight over larger traditional and communal septic systems.
- Establishes various state and local incentives for investors and developers to build workforce housing.
- Increases funding for school construction in towns deemed inclusive.
- Creates a pilot program to fund temporary housing development to house the homeless and veterans.

BILLS THAT PASSED WHICH IMPACT OUR INDUSTRY

(Not all bills have been signed by the Governor at the time this report was completed)

CODES AND STANDARDS

- **[HB 6573](#): AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO DIAPER CHANGING TABLES IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND PLACES OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION.** This bill requires the Codes and Standards Committee to include diaper changing stations in new construction and substantial remodels of public buildings in the next revision of the State Building Codes. Original language in the bill called for an immediate amendment to the Code which HBRA successfully lobbied against.
- **[SB 7](#): AN ACT STRENGTHENING PROTECTIONS FOR CONNECTICUT'S CONSUMERS OF ENERGY.** Among other things, this bill requires DAS, the Office of the State Building Inspector, and the Codes and Standards Committee to study and report on including gas detectors in the State Building Code.
- **[SB 959](#): AN ACT CONCERNING MOLD IN RESIDENTIAL HOUSING.** This bill requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to do the following by January 1, 2024:
 - develop uniform standards for identifying and assessing mold in residential housing.
 - develop uniform standards for remediating mold.
 - develop guidelines for limiting mold exposure in residential housing and uniform standards for assessing the health threat from this exposure, including its effect on indoor air quality.
 - develop a public awareness campaign on mold in residential housing.
 - creates a 12-member working group to evaluate the connection between polybutylene pipes and indoor mold in residential and commercial buildings.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

- **[HB 6648](#): AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE ONLINE RECORDING, INDEXING AND SEARCHING OF MUNICIPAL LAND RECORDS AND MAPS.** The bill establishes a task force to study the online recording, indexing, and searching of municipal land records and maps.
- **[HB 6688](#): AN ACT CONCERNING MORTGAGES, THE RESIDENTIAL HEATING EQUIPMENT FINANCING PROGRAM, THE CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY AND MOBILE MANUFACTURED HOMES.** The bill requires CHFA, to establish a small multifamily lending program to provide acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, and

permanent financing for small multifamily properties. Properties eligible for the program are those with between two and 20 units, but CHFA may allow properties with more units to participate if they accomplish the program's objectives.

- **[HB 5317](#): AN ACT CONCERNING ONLINE BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATIONS.** This bill explicitly authorizes municipalities to accept electronically submitted building permit applications from contractors, aligning the law's building permit signature requirements with current practice.
- **[SB 1002](#): AN ACT CONCERNING ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER CERTIFICATION.** This bill makes the following changes to land use laws:
 - Clarifies a requirement in existing law requiring zoning enforcement officers (ZEOs) to obtain certification from the Connecticut Association of ZEOs,
 - Allows zoning commission or zoning board of appeals (ZBA) members to serve as alternates on a municipality's planning commission, and
 - Exempts land use attorneys serving on land use board from CET requirements and reduces the frequency of the training for nonexempt members.
- **[SB 1092](#): AN ACT CONCERNING THE ACQUISITION AND CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN PROPERTIES BY CONNECTICUT BROWNFIELD LAND BANKS.** This bill among other things allows Connecticut brownfield land banks to enter into land bank agreements with regional councils of government to acquire, retain, remediate, and sell property in a COG's planning region.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **[SB 1147](#): AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.** This bill, among other things, allows DEEP or the Siting Council, as applicable, to deny a permit for a new affecting facility if it finds that approving the permit would result in adverse cumulative environmental or public health stressors in the environmental justice community that are greater than those experienced in other communities. They may additionally impose reasonable conditions on a permit to mitigate environmental and public health impacts if it makes the same findings.

LANDLORD/TENANT

- **[HB 5641](#): AAC PROCEDURES TO PREVENT UTILITY SERVICE TERMINATIONS AT RENTAL PROPERTIES.** This bill requires that a gas company or electric company reinstate service and place the account in the name of the landlord at the landlord's request within 72 hours to avoid damage such as frozen pipes.
- **[HB 6651](#): AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF UNCLAIMED OR ABANDONED REAL PROPERTY ON MUNICIPALITIES.** The bill establishes a task force to study the possible financial and legal consequences incurred by municipalities relating to unclaimed or abandoned real property.
- **[HB 6801](#): AN ACT CONCERNING THE SUBMISSION OF INCOME AND EXPENSE INFORMATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT OF INCOME-PRODUCING REAL PROPERTY.** This bill creates more flexible deadlines, beginning with the statements due June 1, 2024, by

- extending the deadline to request an extension to June 1 and
- allowing filings and extension requests that are postmarked on or by that date to qualify as timely, regardless of when the municipality receives them.
- The bill also specifies the new tax bill:
 - cannot be due less than 30 days after a due date set by the tax collector and printed on the bill,
 - is due and payable in the same way as other municipal taxes,
 - and is subject to the same lien and collections process as other municipal taxes.
- **[HB 6892](#): AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL BLIGHT ORDINANCES AND THE FINE FOR LITTERING.** This bill makes various changes to blight laws, including:
 - expands the communities in which abandoned and blighted property receiverships can be used, by including any community with at least 15,000 people.
 - broadly expands state and local authority to regulate blight to include regulating blighted commercial properties, not just residential ones.
 - increases the maximum daily penalties municipalities can assess for blight under their general powers, from \$100 to \$1,000, for repeat offenders in a 12-month period.
 - increases the maximum state littering fine from \$199 to \$500.
 - The bill also expands the enterprise zone program’s goal of eliminating housing blight to include eliminating any blight. By law, the enterprise zone program offers various tax incentives and other benefits to businesses that start up in or improve real property in areas designated as enterprise zones.

TAXATION

- **[HB 6891](#): AN ACT CONCERNING THE ELECTRONIC PAYMENT OF MUNICIPAL TAXES.** This bill expands the allowable payment methods to include charge cards, debit cards, and electronic payment services (e.g., PayPal).

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & LABOR

- **[HB 6354](#): AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN JOBS CORPS PROGRAM.** This bill requires the Connecticut Clean Economy Council (CCEC) to develop a workforce training plan for green jobs to accomplish the state’s greenhouse gas emissions goals.
- **[SB 869](#): AN ACT CONCERNING ADDITIONAL CAREER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY.** The bill requires OWS to create a plan to expand career accelerator program by identifying,
 - additional training opportunities for careers requiring a maximum of one year of training and
 - related training providers to use.
 - It further requires OWS, by July 1, 2026, to report on the additional training opportunities and providers it identifies to the legislature
- **[SB 913](#): AN ACT EXPANDING WORKERS’ COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS INJURIES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES.** Starting January 1, 2024, this bill expands eligibility for workers’ compensation benefits for post-traumatic stress injuries (PTSI) to cover all employees covered by the workers’ compensation law.

LICENSING AND REGISTRATION

- **HB 6767: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT.** This omnibus General Law bill make several licensing and enforcement changes that impact residential construction including:
 - Increases civil penalties for violations of various licensing laws, including those on apprentice hiring; gives the DCP commissioner new enforcement options for violations of apprentice hiring laws.
 - Expands the information that people with criminal histories must submit to DCP when asking if their conviction disqualifies them from obtaining various occupational credentials.
 - Establishes that new home construction contractor registrations renewed during the transition year from biennial to annual credentialing will be effective for 18 months and cost \$180.
 - Modifies requirements for getting and maintaining a home improvement contractor or salesperson registration; increases civil penalties for violating related laws.
- **HB 6769: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING REAL ESTATE LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT.** This bill makes several changes to real estate licensing and enforcement laws. ([Click here for a summary](#))

BILLS THAT IF PASSED WOULD HAVE NEGATIVELY IMPACTED OUR INDUSTRY

(This an **inexhaustive list bills that the HBRA opposed, that if passed would have negatively impacted our industry or the Connecticut business climate in general**)

- HB06918 AN ACT CONCERNING ERASURE OF CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS.
- HB06797 AN ACT CONCERNING PLANS FOR THE TREATMENT OF WORKPLACE INJURIES AND ILLNESSES AND ESTABLISHING WORKING GROUPS TO REVIEW ACCESS TO MEDICAL RECORDS AND PARTIAL DISABILITY PAYMENTS UNDER THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT.
- HB06798 AN ACT CONCERNING CONCRETE MIXTURES INTENDED FOR USE IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDING FOUNDATIONS.
- HB06401 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF LOW EMBODIED CARBON CONCRETE IN STATE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.
- SB01179 AN ACT AMENDING CONNECTICUT PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE.
- HB06862 AN ACT CONCERNING BROADBAND CONSTRUCTION AND THE PREVAILING WAGE.
- HB06859 AN ACT CONCERNING PREDICTABLE SCHEDULING.
- HB06273 AN ACT CONCERNING DISCLOSURE OF SALARY RANGES ON PUBLIC AND INTERNAL JOB POSTINGS.
- HB06792 AN ACT CONCERNING WAGE THEFT RESPONSIBILITY.
- HB06668 AN ACT MODERNIZING THE PAID SICK DAYS STATUTES.
- SB00228 AN ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYEES' LOSS OF HEALTH CARE COVERAGE AS A RESULT OF A LABOR DISPUTE.
- SB00021 AN ACT PROHIBITING EMPLOYERS FROM REQUIRING AN EMPLOYMENT PROMISSORY NOTE AS A CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT.

- HB06860 AN ACT EXTENDING CONNECTICUT PREMIUM PAY TO CERTAIN ESSENTIAL WORKERS.
- HB06657 AN ACT CONCERNING NONCONSENSUAL TOWING.
- SB01178 AN ACT EXPANDING CONNECTICUT PAID SICK DAYS.
- SB01177 AN ACT CONCERNING ONE FAIR WAGE.
- SB01137 AN ACT CONCERNING SHORT-TERM RENTAL FACILITATORS AND PROPERTIES.
- SB01120 AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' RIGHTS.
- HB06848 AN ACT CONCERNING GAS LEAK DETECTORS IN NEW AND EXISTING CONSTRUCTION.
- HB06397 AN ACT CONCERNING ZERO-CARBON EMISSIONS.
- SB01123 AN ACT AMENDING CODIFICATION OF PREVAILING WAGE CONTRACT RATES.
- HB06788 AN ACT CONCERNING WORKING CONDITIONS.
- SB00979 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONNECTICUT HOME ENERGY LABEL AND THE TREE CANOPY OF CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES.
- SB00961 AN ACT CONCERNING CARBON-FREE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND ESTABLISHING OTHER SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS.
- HB06666 AN ACT EXPANDING RENTERS' RIGHTS.
- HB06633 AN ACT CONCERNING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLANS FOR MUNICIPALITIES TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.
- SB00996 AN ACT CONCERNING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE STATE, ESTABLISHING A HOUSING AUTHORITY RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM AND A HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER TASK FORCE AND REQUIRING THE DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN NATURAL PERSON OWNERSHIP INTERESTS IN REAL PROPERTY.
- HB06606 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF CERTAIN PRODUCTS MADE FROM POLYSTYRENE.
- SB00943 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RETURN OF SECURITY DEPOSITS UPON THE TERMINATION OF TENANCY.
- HB06609 AN ACT CONCERNING EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR SMOKE DETECTORS.
- HB05602 AN ACT PROHIBITING HIGH-FREQUENCY COMMERCIAL SEISMIC SURVEYING IN LONG ISLAND SOUND FOR GAS AND OIL EXPLORATION.
- SB01035 AN ACT CONCERNING STOP WORK ORDERS.
- SB00938 AN ACT CONCERNING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR STRIKING WORKERS.
- HB06594 AN ACT CONCERNING NONCOMPETE AGREEMENTS.
- HB06551 AN ACT CONCERNING STANDARD WAGES FOR CERTAIN SERVICE WORKERS AND PAID LEAVE.