Honorable Members of the Housing Committee, please consider my testimony submitted for the February 27th, 2024, Public Hearing, **I oppose** **H.B.** **# 5242**

My name is Bob De Cosmo and I manage the *CT Property Owners Alliance,* a housing advocacy organization that communicates on a regular basis with nearly 3,200 CT Property Owners and Real Estate professionals.

I don't know where to begin, this is one of the worst pieces of legislation that I have ever seen in my 27 years of being a housing advocate.Here are a few examples of what is wrong with this Bill.

1. It puts the health, safety, and welfare of our current residents at risk by allowing dangerous felons the ability to move in.
2. Connecticut has the 4th highest rate of recidivism in the country and more transitional / supportive housing is needed for many felons.
3. Causes owners to violate the Fair Housing Laws by treating applicants with criminal records differently.
4. Is an afront to the civil rights movement by making felons a protected class under the fair housing law. Criminals had free will to decide whether to commit a crime or not.
5. Allows housing authorities the ability to deny lifetime sex-offenders registrants but doesn't allow private owners the same ability.
6. Requires owners to rent to those with misdemeanors records <u>regardless of how many convictions they have</u> for such crimes as
   a. assault on an elderly citizen 3rd degree.
   b. strangulation 3rd degree.
   c. reckless endangerment 1st degree.
   d. Prostitution and more.
7. Violations of the proposed Bill will open the door to many new CHRO investigations that have a low standard of proof, which is a reasonable cause to believe but should be preponderance of the evidence. Many owners would be brought forward on frivolous discrimination complaints when other factors such as a lack of income were the basis for the felons denial of the apartment.

Please do not let this Bill out of Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob De Cosmo
President CT Property Owners Alliance