



ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAM TONG  
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

**Testimony Regarding House Bill No. 6589:  
*An Act Concerning Rent Stabilization in Mobile Manufactured Home Parks***

Housing Committee

February 21, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding House Bill No. 6589: *An Act Concerning Rent Stabilization in Mobile Manufactured Home Parks*.

The Office of the Attorney General fully supports the Committee's efforts to protect mobile home residents through this proposal and a second bill the Committee heard last week, Senate Bill No. 988, *An Act Concerning the Purchase of Mobile Manufactured Home Parks*. It is no secret that Connecticut faces severe housing affordability challenges. According to a [CTInsider analysis](#), Connecticut rents have risen steadily over the past five years, with exceptionally low vacancy rates driving rents even higher over the past two years. Mobile home communities remain some of the more affordable housing choices, particularly for low-income seniors. Keeping our mobile home communities safe, well-maintained, and affordable is vital. To that end, the rent cap of 2.5 percent, as provided for in H.B. 6589, may be appropriate to consider. If the Committee proceeds with a similar rent cap, I would urge you not to broadly carve out properties from the cap based on age.

Over the past year, my office has had numerous communications with residents from the Beechwood Community in Killingworth who have seen sustained, escalating rent hikes despite deteriorating conditions. Beechwood residents, like many residents of mobile manufactured home parks, own their homes but pay monthly rent for the lot of land they sit on. That rent covers various common amenities, including property maintenance. I urge the Committee to consider expanding this cap to consider not just rent paid for a "dwelling" but the "lot rent" more common in these communities as well.

I visited Beechwood last November and met with several dozen residents regarding the challenges they are experiencing. These problems began in 2019, after Beechwood was acquired by Sun Communities, one of several real estate investment trusts that have acquired hundreds of mobile home parks across the country. Nationally [private investors like Sun have purchased mobile home communities](#), replacing local ownership and management with out-of-town corporate executives who report to boards of directors and shareholders. The result has been increased lot rent and decreased responsiveness to tenant needs. Sun Communities owns several properties in Connecticut, including properties in Southington, Westbrook, Storrs, Uncasville, Old Mystic, and Danbury.

Residents of mobile home communities have little control over a change in ownership, despite the huge impact these changes have on their quality of life, pocketbooks, and property values. In the event of a sale, it is only fair that residents be given the opportunity match any sales price to purchase and manage their own community, as provided for in S.B 988.

When I visited Beechwood, I heard complaints from multiple residents regarding community-wide



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septic problems. Beechwood tenants reported that Sun has not kept up with regular septic tank maintenance, and as a result tenants are experiencing sewage back-ups into their sinks, toilets, and bathtubs. Many of these tenants are elderly and disabled. Some have paid out of pocket to have plumbers address problems resulting from these septic backups. One disabled resident complained of a large beehive in front of her porch. The management company said they did not have money in their budget to remove it. The tenant paid herself to get it removed. Another tenant complained that her stairs lacked rails and were loose. She reported that maintenance agreed they were dangerous, but management has yet to fix them.

I have referred each of these complaints to the Department of Consumer Protection, which inspects, licenses, and investigates complaints from mobile home park residents, and enforces Connecticut's laws and regulations regarding these parks. My office is in close communication with DCP on this matter and I strongly support their work in this area. I will be bringing these complaints directly to the attention of Sun management as well.

Residents everywhere—regardless of the type of property—deserve affordable, safe, appropriately maintained housing. I fully support the Housing Committee in their efforts to ensure Connecticut's mobile home communities remain an affordable option.