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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

COALITION ASKS CT LEGISLATURE TO ACT ON LAND USE REFORM

HARTFORD, Conn. – A coalition of organizations supporting statewide land use reform convened at the south steps of the Connecticut State Capitol Tuesday, July 14th at noon to call upon the State Legislature to pass comprehensive land use reform during the special session. They wish to thank Majority Leader Matt Ritter, the Honorable Doug McCrory, and the Honorable Saud Anwar for their insights and comments for the press conference, soon to be available at CT-N and on the DesegregateCT website.

“As people throughout our State respond to the ongoing public health crisis and demand systemic change to address the scourge of racism, now is the time to desegregate Connecticut,” said **Sara Bronin, Desegregate CT organizer**. “These initiatives will increase housing supply, generate housing diversity, and improve the process for approving new residential development – expanding access to opportunity.”

“CCM recognizes that local land use laws can contribute to the racial and socioeconomic segregation we see in Connecticut, and if we are serious about combatting systemic racism and promoting greater diversity throughout our communities, we should include land use laws in that conversation,” said **Joseph DeLong, CEO of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities**. “While our members do not all agree on every proposal that’s been put forward, we support the legislature in considering a serious reform agenda aimed at creating more diverse housing opportunities and more diverse communities. Increasing housing supply, increasing the diversity of housing options, and improving the local approval process could make a meaningful difference in building a stronger and more inclusive Connecticut.”

“The CT Chapter of the American Planning Association proudly supports the Desegregate CT legislative platform and urges the General Assembly to act,” said **American Planning Association Connecticut Chapter President Rebecca Augur**. “As a nation and state, we have a unique opportunity right now to try to right longstanding injustices. CCAPA has previously advocated for more limited legislative changes aimed at inducing more affordable and diverse housing development. However, now is the time to significantly reform zoning to address institutional, structural and procedural

practices that have stymied socio-economic integration across our communities. We look forward to working with our communities and legislators on this important effort.”

“The Hartford Foundation has committed to working toward increasing the number of current Hartford residents living in higher opportunity neighborhoods both by investing in Hartford neighborhoods and by enhancing the ability of residents to choose to move to other areas throughout the Greater Hartford region,” said **Hartford Foundation President Jay Williams**. “While there is much to do on both fronts, we are in full support of DesegregateCT’s efforts to create meaningful changes to our antiquated and discriminatory housing policies. Enacting these proposals will be a challenge, but the status quo is unacceptable and demands significant policy changes to end systemic housing segregation in Connecticut.”

“Residential segregation in Connecticut didn't happen by mistake. It is the result of intentionally exclusionary public policies codified in local land use regulations. Now is the time to openly recognize this history and redress it by making long overdue changes to land use and zoning in our state, making all communities inclusive communities. Regional Plan Association is proud to support DesegregateCT and work towards a more equitable region for all,” said **Melissa Kaplan-Macey, Vice President of State Programs and Connecticut Director at Regional Plan Association**.

“Our current zoning laws exacerbate inequality and educational disparities among minorities and low-income populations,” said **Omarys Vasquez, representing the Connecticut Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA)**. “By remaking our communities to foster more inclusivity, we are taking a step towards eliminating the barriers that prevent low-income families the benefits of living in better neighborhoods, in cities and towns alike, that have access to good quality schools and more opportunities. NOMA Connecticut is proud to join with AIA Connecticut in support of the efforts, vision, and goals of DesegregateCT.”

“At Connecticut Main Street Center, one of our core values is inclusiveness,” said **Patrick McMahon, CEO of CT Main Street Center**. We believe downtowns are for everyone, that they thrive when diverse voices are represented. We’ve seen how restrictive zoning policies can limit people’s choices, and conversely how lives and communities are improved through more inclusive zoning like "missing middle" housing, repurposing existing structures, and increased transit options. We’re proud to join with other economic development and preservation organizations in supporting the policy goals of DesegregateCT.”

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED:

Advance CT
American Institute of Architects – CT
American Planning Association – CT
Center for Latino Progress

Coalition for Westport
Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut
CT Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities
CT Main Street Center
CT Preservation Action
CT Voices for Children
CT Women's Education and Legal Fund
Education Reform Now
Fairfield County Center for Housing Opportunity
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
HOPE Partnership
LISC CT
Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission
Mansfield Non-Profit Housing Development Corporation
National Organization of Minority Architects – CT (charter pending)
Northeastern CT Council of Governments
Old Saybrook March for Justice
Preservation Connecticut
Partnership for Strong Communities
Regional Plan Association
Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance
Supportive Housing Works
Transport Hartford Academy
Universal Health Care Foundation of CT
Urban Hope Refuge Church
Urban League of Southern Connecticut

ABOUT DESEGREGATECT: DesegregateCT is a collaborative of people and institutions dedicated to changing statewide land use laws to ensure a more just and equitable Connecticut.

WEBSITE: www.desegregatect.org
Special Session Agenda: www.desegregatect.org/special20

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