

# CT's affordable housing goal remains out of reach, data shows, as state considers changes to 8-30g

By **Jordan Nathaniel Fenster**, Staff Writer

March 29, 2026

 Gift Article



An architectural rendering shows the proposed 100-unit affordable housing apartment building developer Darius

Courtesy of Darius, which is in line with the state's 8-30g law.

[Show More](#)



Old Saybrook First Selectman Carl Fortuna dc  
the state-set benchmark of 10% affordable h



It's not that Fortuna opposes affordable housing development, or the notion that the state can and perhaps should encourage towns to develop more affordable housing. He just believes the math will never allow Old Saybrook, or most towns, to reach that 10% goal.

---

**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad



---

“The town of Old Saybrook has, let’s say, 5,000 units. If we have to only build affordable housing — and a massive amount of it —

In Old Saybrook, a developer recently completed an apartment building with 187 units, 37 of which are affordable, he said. So, while that increases the number of residential units considered "affordable" under the state's definition of the word, it did not get Old Saybrook much closer to that 10% goal.

---

## More For You

**New Haven native, Israeli soldier, killed in battle in Lebanon**



---

**Data: CT's affordable housing goal remains out of reach as state weighs changes**



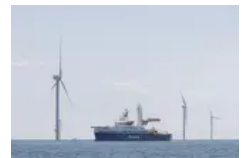
---

**Connecticut offered big data center tax breaks. Only one has taken them**



---

**Life building a wind farm: 12-hour shifts, storms and isolation off CT's coast**



---

**8 people experiencing homelessness died from the cold in CT in just 6 weeks**



"The 10%, I believe, is aspirational, but somewhat unrealistic for the majority of our towns," Fortuna said.





### Take control of your search results

Make CT Insider a preferred source on Google to see more of our journalism when you search.

Add Preferred Source

The 10% affordable housing benchmark was set by the state into law in 1989, part of the law now referred to as 8-30g after the section of statute in which it resides. The law sets a goal towns are supposed to reach: If less than 10% of a municipality's housing stock is affordable, that town must prove that any denial of an affordable housing development was necessary. Affordable housing units must be deed-restricted and remain "affordable." using the state's definition of the word, for 40 years.



The law was updated in 2000 to allow a mora affordable housing unit garners a town one p statute will be paused for four years if the nu town's housing stock.



The state legislature is this year considering a suite of bills that would, in both small and larger ways, tweak the state's bedrock affordable housing statute. Not everyone agrees that the law, in effect for nearly four decades, has resulted in a higher percentage of affordable housing. State data suggests the results have been mixed.

---

**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad

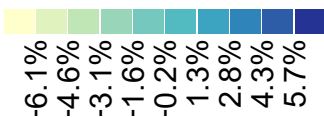
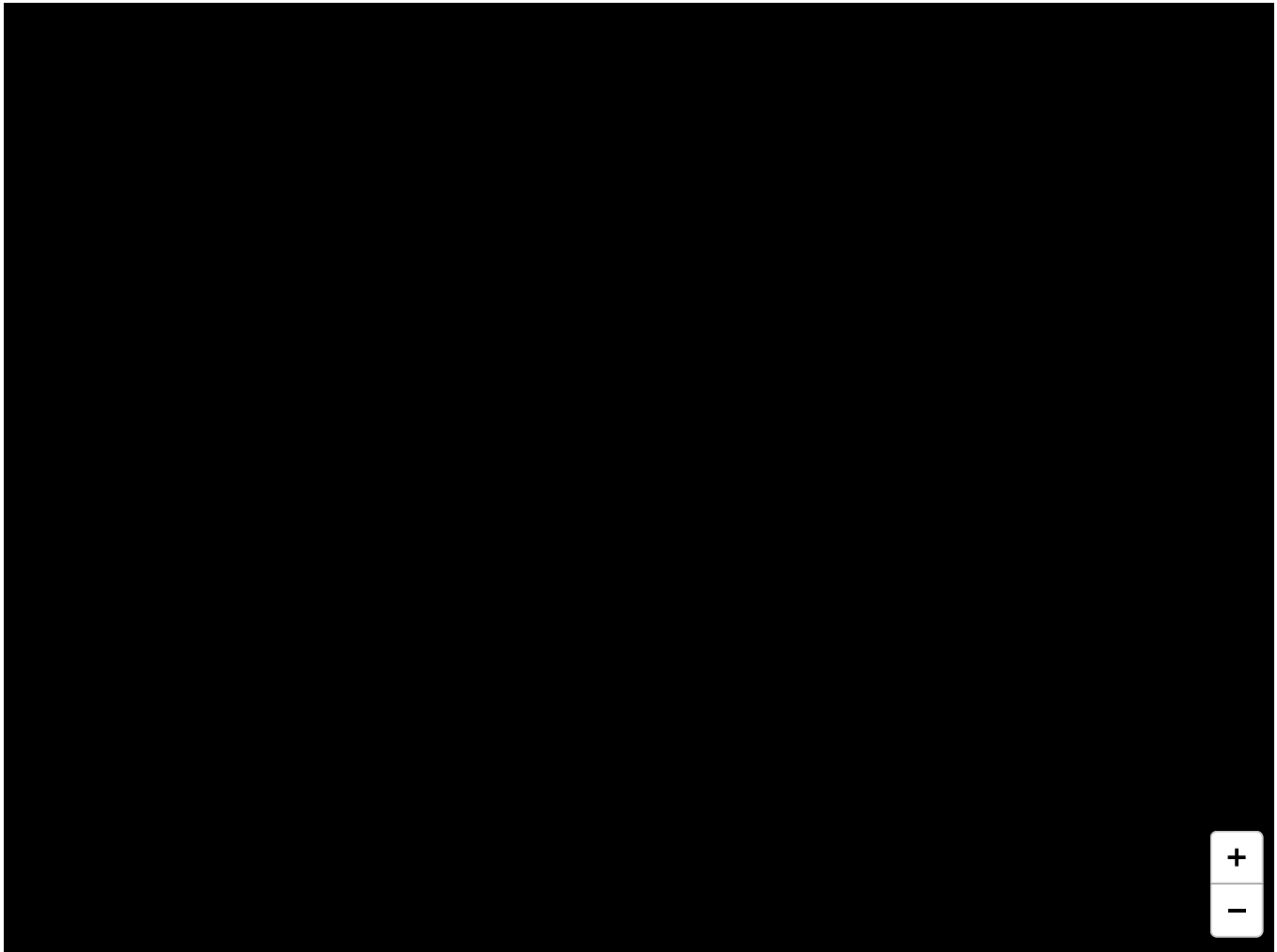
---

The state Department of Housing is required of towns that achieved that benchmark. A [CT](#) shows that the number of towns where 10% and are therefore exempt from the provisions much.



# Changes in affordable housing

The percent difference by town of affordable housing between 2002 and 2025



In 2002, a total of 31 municipalities were exempt from the provisions of 8-30g. That number hit a low of 29 towns in 2003 and a high of 32 in several later years. But as of 2025, a total of 31 municipalities were exempt.

Some towns have made progress. About 76 towns saw a percentage of affordable housing increase. Berlin went from 2.92% in 2002 to 10.14% in 2025. Derby grew from 8.91% in 2002 to 13.75% in 2025. Franklin increased from 2.25% in 2002 to 7.09% in 2025.



**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad

Others have moved in the opposite direction as 74 towns saw the affordable percentage of their housing stock decrease. Killingly fell from 16.91% in 2002 to 9.37% in 2025, while Putnam decreased from 20.30% in 2002 to 13.56% in 2025.

“If you’re hoping that 80% of the towns would get to 10% over the next 20 years, I’ll take the against side every day,” Fortuna said. “It’s just not going to happen.”

### Affordable housing in Connecticut over time

The total number of units by town and the percent of those units deemed affordable

Search in table

Page 1 of 17 >

Municipality	2002 Units (2000 Census)	2025 Units (2020 Census)	Unit Change	Percent	Percent
Andover	1,198	1,324	126		
Ansonia	7,937	8,104	167		
Ashford	1,699	1,923	224		
Avon	6,480	7,713	1,233		
Barkhamsted	1,436	1,566	130		

Beacon Falls	2,104	2,618	514	2.2%	3.0%	0.8%
Berlin	6,955	8,571	1,616	2.9%	10.1%	7.2%
Bethany	1,792	2,039	247	0.2%	0.7%	0.6%
Bethel	6,653	7,980	1,327	6.5%	5.4%	-1.1%
Bethlehem	1,388	1,605	217	2.0%	2.0%	-0.0%

Towns with 10 percent or greater affordable housing stock are not subject to 8-30g.

Table: Jordan Fenster Source: [CT DOH](#)

## Proposed changes to the law

Affordable housing advocates say the latest round of bills before the



statewide approach makes it more difficult for towns to build affordable housing and takes away their sense of self-determination.

**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad



Raphael Podolsky said called 8-30g is a “pivotal statute,” that makes all the other laws that deal with inclusionary zoning “work properly.”

Podolsky, an attorney and policy advocate with Connecticut Legal Services, which advocates for and provides legal assistance to low-income families, said that where other affordable housing laws deal with the planning process, with 8-30g a developer must already have a plan.

“What makes it so central is that it actually generates housing,” he said.

One bill would implement recommendations suggested by the Majority Leader’s Roundtable on Affordable Housing, which first convened in 2023. That bill would, among other changes, allow towns to stop affordable housing projects during the appeals process under certain circumstances.

---

**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad



---

Another bill would allow modular and pre-fabricated homes to count toward a town's affordable housing requirements. Another bill would change the length of time a development must remain "affordable" to qualify under the law. Another would change the legal definition of "affordable." One proposed measure, "An act concerning municipal right of first refusal," would allow municipalities to exercise a right of first refusal to purchase property identified as an affordable housing development.

In all, no fewer than 12 individual bills seek in some way address 8-30g. Some would change what kinds of units can be counted toward 8-30g requirements. Some would alter the moratorium provision. Others would change or remove the 40-year deed restriction for some types of housing.

"There's always efforts every year to take one category of housing that isn't actually restricted affordable, and give municipalities credit as if it was restricted affordable, and thereby weakening the 8-30g process," said John Guskowski, co-chair of the Connecticut chapter of the American Planning Association. "There's various ways that the bills have attempted to weaken 8-30g, and we've testified against several of them this year."

House Majority Leader Jason Rojas, D-East Hartford, said some, perhaps many, of the bills might not make it through to the governor's desk, but he said the issues deserved to be heard.

✕

---

**ADVERTISEMENT**  
Article continues below tl



---

"I don't know that I agree with them all, but it's not my job to only put forward things that I agree with," he said. "That's part of why we're not putting it all in one bill, because I don't know that I really want some of these things to pass, but they warrant conversation."

When asked whether there was a common theme among the proposals, Podolsky said "they weaken the statute as a whole."

"Some of them are focused on making it easier to get a moratorium," he said. "Some are focused on reducing the requirements that the developments have significant affordability, some proposed procedural changes that would make people not want to use the statute."

State Sen. Jeff Gordon, R-Woodstock, served Planning and Zoning Commission, and is rank Planning and Development Committee. He sa

**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad

---

"I'm amazed that people continue to want to tinker with 8-30g and not make serious, meaningful reforms to it," he said.

"Woodstock is a rural community, 8,000 people. I always joke we have more cows than people. We have a lot of dairy farms and a lot of farmland, and we don't really have public transportation. We have a limited number of jobs, and we don't have public water, for example," Gor people to want to move to Woodstock for affc have the building block for it, and it's not bec



Erin Boggs, executive director of Open Comm following Connecticut housing law closely for

an iterative process. There are voices on both sides of the discussion, and some years those voices get heard, she said.

“Every year we see efforts weaken or even get rid of 8-30g, and the strategy for dealing with those varies from year to year, depending on chairing different committees and the leadership in the legislature,” she said. “I think this year, there was to be an openness to considering some of these proposals, and we’ll see what actually makes it to the floor and what actually passes.”

---

**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad

---

## Housing availability

Gov. Ned Lamont has said there is an affordable housing “crisis” in Connecticut, and he’s not alone in that assessment. ×

“We really need more housing,” said state Sen. ...  
chair of the legislature’s Planning and Development ...  
talk about transit-oriented housing, workforce ...  
affordable housing, in all areas you have a hc



# Active listings in Connecticut

The number of active housing units in Connecticut by month

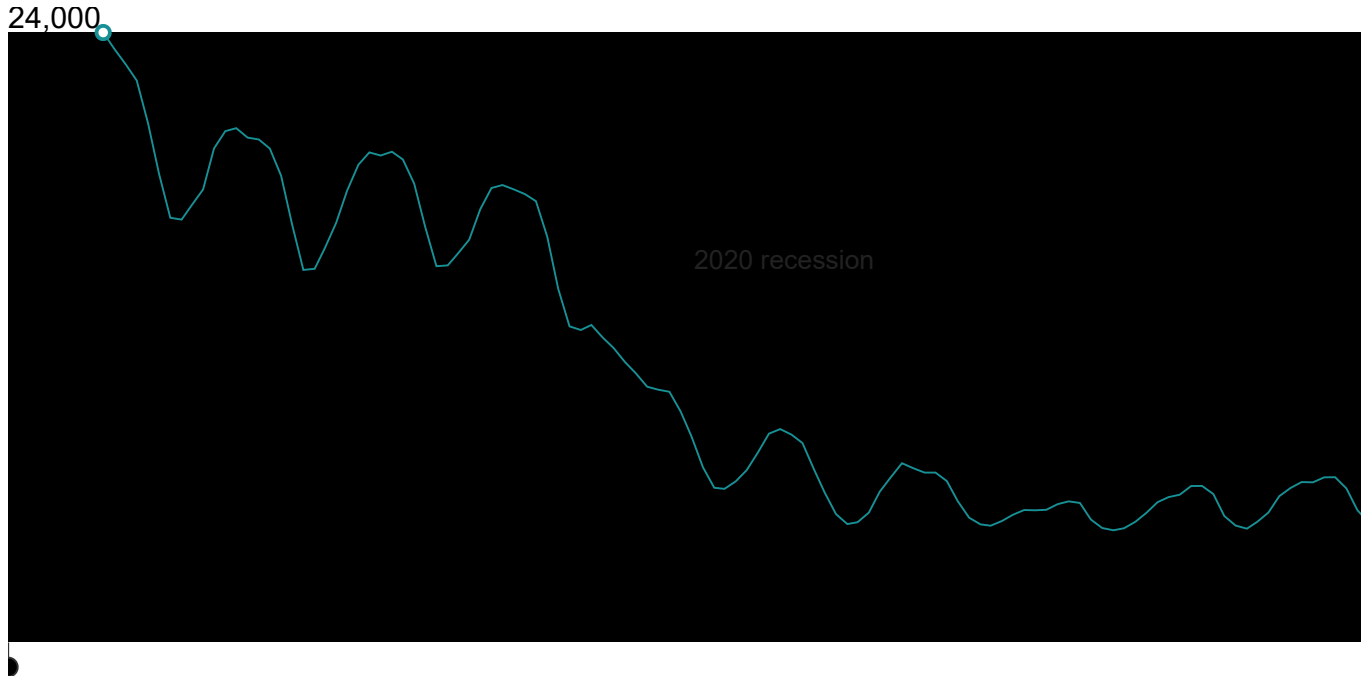


Chart: Jordan Fenster Source: [Realtor.com](https://www.realtor.com)

Data bears that out. In 2019, there were nearly 18,000 active real estate listings in Connecticut, down from 24,000 on to Realtor.com data. As of February 2026, the listings, statewide.



**ADVERTISEMENT**  
Article continues below tl

---

Rental units have similarly become scarcer. In 1995, 15.2% of all rental units in Connecticut were available, according to U.S. Census data. By 2024, that number had dropped to 2.9%, though there was an increase to 4.7% in 2025.

### **Rental vacancy rate**

The percentage of rental units in Connecticut that are vacant by year



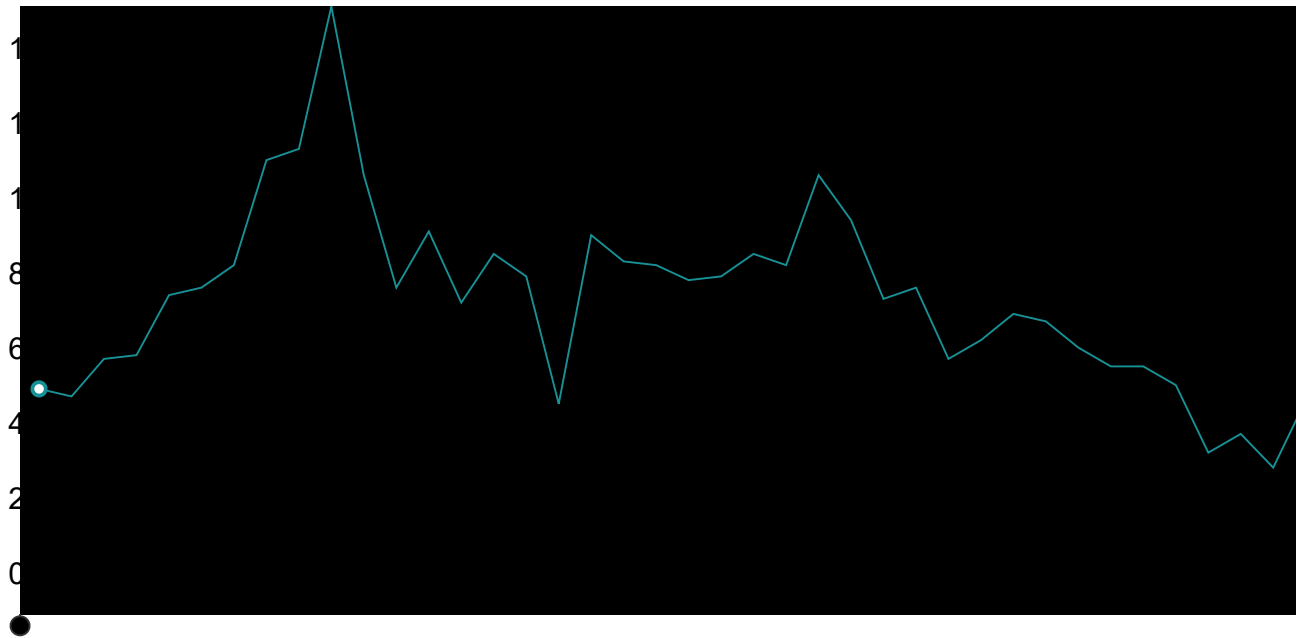


Chart: Jordan Fenster Source: [U.S. Census Bureau](#)

“If it wasn’t for 8-30g, you would have few to probably zero affordable housing units built in some of our most exclusive communities,” Boggs said. “Housing crisis or not, that’s just not a situation that we should want to find ourselves in as a state.”



## The local control argument



Since its inception, 8-30g has been a point of that the law takes away town leaders’ ability

and allows developers to override local preferences.

---

**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad

---

"The law has been in place since the early '90s, and it's done a ton of good, creating thousands of affordable units for decades," said Hugh Bailey, policy director for Open Communities Alliance. "The reason it's so controversial is because it's effective."

Greenwich First Selectman Fred Camillo has been an open opponent to 8-30g for years, primarily resting his argument on the idea that the state should not dictate how towns build more affordable housing.

For example, when Greenwich Hospital built affordable housing for its employees, those units did not count toward Greenwich's 8-30g requirements. According to federal law, units may only be designated as affordable housing if they are available to any

"These are people that need housing, and they're in the game in many cases, because they're competitive." "My argument would be, if they're getting any lot of the units are, then the town should get



**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below this ad

There is also an argument, the logic of which many of this year's bill proposals seem to follow, that more housing means more affordable housing: Build more units and the cost of each individual unit will decrease.

But according to Guskowski, that's not wholly true.

"That's a common refrain that we hear from municipalities and municipal advocacy groups," he said. "It isn't just, 'We need more affordable housing,' full stop. We need more housing, and maybe focus on affordable ... but we shouldn't equate those. Just the fact that there is more housing does not mean now or even in the near future, that all housing is going to get less expensive. That just doesn't follow."

There is some data, Boggs said, to show that "more supply will bring down prices," but she said that argument relies on :



**ADVERTISEMENT**

Article continues below tl



---

“It assumes that someone who’s living in an area that may have lower resources, that’s maybe less desirable for a number of reasons, is going to now move to a neighborhood that is ‘more desirable’ or has additional resources, and that’s going to filter on up,” she said.

“But ... you end up with the people with the least resources in the areas that have the most challenges and in units that have the most challenges. Unless you have some percentage of deed-restricted housing everywhere, you don’t end up with that important effect of having integrated housing choices.”

