



Good afternoon, Honorable members of the (Senate Community & Urban Affairs Committee/Assembly Housing Committee). My name is Sofia Rosa, Digital Strategist at the Latino Action Network Foundation, a charitable organization with the goal of uniting NJ diverse Latino communities.

I stand before you today to express my strong support for A4/S50. A4/S50 represents a significant stride forward, streamlining the affordable housing development process for municipalities. It codifies the methodology to determine each town's affordable housing obligations, avoiding prolonged judicial involvement and reducing legal costs. The legislation maintains a commitment to ensuring every town does its fair share, prohibiting RCA's to prevent wealthy towns from sidestepping their obligations.

As housing costs surge in New Jersey, working families, particularly our Black and Latino/a/x residents, bear the brunt of this crisis due to historical residential segregation. A4/S50 is a call to action, not just for affordable housing but for economic growth, community stability, and social equity. Access to affordable housing in vibrant communities addresses root problems, while housing shortages hinder our state's labor supply and economic growth.

The success of the Mount Laurel framework relies on robust enforcement. Historical gaps, exacerbated by COAH from the late '90s to 2015, are still being addressed. Current judiciary enforcement has doubled annual affordable housing production since 2015, but a deficit of over 230,000 affordable homes persists.

The legislation not only addresses housing costs but also reduces municipal spending, allowing funds to be redirected to affordable housing development. New Jersey stands at a critical moment, grappling with income inequality and a deepening housing crisis. I speak not just as a representative of LANF but as a resident deeply connected to our state.

As we approach the 2025 obligations, the urgency to pass this bill is clear. Strengthening the Mount Laurel Doctrine is our compass, guiding us towards an inclusive economic future. Our dedication today shapes the tomorrow of every New Jerseyan.

Thank you for your time and dedication to the people of New Jersey.