

# HB 5396: YES IN GOD'S BACKYARD (YIGBY)

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## What is YIGBY?

YIGBY allows faith communities to develop affordable housing on land they already own through a clear and predictable approval process.

Projects could include:

- Converting unused church buildings into apartments
- Building small homes on excess property
- Creating senior housing or family units

Faith communities want to help address the housing crisis – YIGBY makes it possible.



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## Connecticut faces a severe housing shortage



- Rents and home prices are rising rapidly
- Essential workers cannot afford to live in the communities they serve
- Seniors on fixed incomes are being pushed out
- Young families are struggling to stay in Connecticut

Connecticut needs tens of thousands of additional homes.

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## What YIGBY Actually Does

YIGBY creates a clear and fair approval process for housing on faith-owned land.

Projects must:

- Meet building and safety codes
- Follow environmental protections
- Comply with local design standards
- Require that at least 20% of units be designated as affordable housing.
- Follow fair housing laws

Local review is completed within 90 days using objective standards.

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## Faith Communities Are Ready to Help

Congregations across Connecticut often have:

- Underused land or buildings
- Deep roots in their neighborhoods
- A moral commitment to care for neighbors

But right now, local approval processes are often too long, unpredictable, and costly for congregations trying to create housing.





# Demystifying the Myths



**✗ MYTH:**

YIGBY is about “zombie congregations” trying to profit off declining churches.

**✓ FACT:**

Faith communities across Connecticut remain active anchors in their neighborhoods.

Many congregations have underused land or buildings and want to use those resources to benefit their communities, including by developing housing.

**✗ MYTH:**

YIGBY allows uncontrolled development.

**✓ FACT:**

Projects must still meet all building codes, environmental protections, and local design standards.

**✗ MYTH:**

YIGBY will attract outside developers looking for a zoning loophole.

**✓ FACT:**

YIGBY applies to faith communities that have owned their property for 3+ years, ensuring projects come from established congregations rooted in their communities.

## STATES THAT HAVE PASSED YIGBY

- Florida SB 1730 (2025)
- Hawaii HCR 122 (2024)
- Maryland HB 538 (2024)
- California SB 4 (2023)
- Oregon HB 2008, SB 8 (2021)
- Washington HB 11377-S (2019)

## STATES PURSUING YIGBY

- Arizona
- Colorado
- Massachusetts
- Rhode Island
- Virginia
- Minnesota
- New York
- New Jersey
- South Carolina
- Kentucky
- Texas
- Connecticut

