

Lou Mansolillo

From: Shane Cooper <scooperre@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 9, 2024 12:30 PM
To: House Corporations Committee
Subject: Oppose H8335

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Bill H8335, which mandates that sellers conduct radon testing at their expense no more than one year prior to sale and requires sellers to install mitigation systems and pay for additional testing if necessary. While I understand the intent behind this proposal is to ensure the safety and well-being of future homeowners, I believe it will have several unintended negative consequences that outweigh its benefits.

Firstly, this bill creates an additional barrier to much-needed housing stock being listed as soon as possible. With the current housing shortage, it is imperative that we facilitate rather than hinder the process of bringing homes to market. The added requirement for sellers to conduct radon testing and potentially install mitigation systems will delay the listing process, thereby exacerbating the existing housing crisis.

Secondly, buyers already have the capability to conduct radon testing during the inspection phase of a home purchase. They can also request that the seller undertake necessary mitigation measures based on the results of these tests. This existing framework allows for flexibility and negotiation between the parties involved, ensuring that the responsibility for radon mitigation can be appropriately shared or transferred based on the specific circumstances of each transaction.

Furthermore, this bill will inevitably add to the timeline of transferring available housing to buyers. The process of testing for radon, waiting for results, and then potentially installing mitigation systems will significantly extend the time it takes for a property to change hands. This delay is counterproductive in a market where the timely availability of housing is critical. There are currently just over 1,100 residential single and multifamily homes listed for sale in Rhode Island. There are only 19 radon inspectors. This would be a substantial amount of work to complete immediately, throwing a wrench into plans of stability of unsuspecting homebuyers and sellers. While radon is thought to take several years to decades to have potential negative effects, it is reasonable to think that a buyer can choose to seek mitigation after closing if they think it is appropriate.

Additionally, the proposal does not take into account the situation of sellers who may need to enter into short sale agreements or other distressed sales where they do not have the financial resources to perform the required work. These sellers may be facing the imminent threat of losing their homes and adding this financial burden could lead to further hardship.

I believe better outcomes can be achieved by providing more education regarding the dangers of radon. Educating both buyers and sellers about the risks and mitigation options would empower them to negotiate terms that are best suited to their personal needs and financial situations. This approach respects the autonomy of the parties involved and encourages informed decision-making without imposing additional regulatory burdens.

In conclusion, while the safety concerns addressed by Bill H8335 are valid, the proposed measures must be carefully considered. I urge you to consider alternative solutions that protect homebuyers without placing undue burdens on sellers and further straining the housing market.

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