



May 15, 2024

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House, 82 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: HB 8000 – An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government – Affordable Housing Rent Pilot Program

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of ONE Neighborhood Builders, I applaud Representative Morales for introducing House Bill 8000, which is an innovative solution to address our state's housing crisis. This bill would appropriate three million dollars (\$3,000,000) for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 to create a tax rebate pilot program for landlords offering more affordable rents to tenants who earn less than eighty percent (80%) of the area median income (AMI).

Access to quality, affordable housing is necessary for every Rhode Islander. Financial investment in the development of affordable housing and in programs that promote housing stabilization is critical as we work to address Rhode Island's shortage of housing. While our housing shortage is at crisis levels, we know how to address the problem. To do so, Rhode Island must leverage every tool available to us to produce, preserve, and protect affordable housing at the scale we need. Especially as federal recovery funds are spent, new sources of revenue are critical to advance the solutions we know we need.

Our state legislature has a critical role to play in incentivizing the development and preservation of quality, safe, and affordable housing for Rhode Islanders.

I look forward to reviewing the details of the legislation in greater detail and welcome the opportunity to work with the sponsors to refine this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Hawkins".

Jennifer Hawkins
President & CEO, ONE Neighborhood Builders