



March 18, 2025

The Honorable Robert E. Craven Sr.
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street, Providence RI 02903

Re: Support for House Bills 5794 and 5795

Dear Chair Craven and Members of the Committee:

The mission of the Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI) is to increase the supply of safe, healthy, and affordable homes in thriving communities. On behalf of HNRI and our membership of 18 nonprofit affordable housing developers, I write in **strong support of House Bills 5794 and 5795**. We thank Speaker Shekarchi and the bill sponsors for their sustained leadership on housing and for advancing a comprehensive package of legislation that supports increased opportunities to build more homes for Rhode Islanders that are critically needed.

The cost of housing – including the price of homes for rent, homes for sale, construction, and utilities - has increased dramatically since 2019, and people cannot keep pace. There are not enough homes being built, and the choked supply, combined with upward economic pressures and inflation, means more Rhode Islanders are facing housing instability, or are stuck in homes that no longer match their life's circumstances. The two housing bills proposed here build on prior legislation and further our progress in reducing barriers to residential development by streamlining and providing clarity within provisions of Rhode Island zoning law.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support of these important pieces of legislation with this Committee, and respectfully urge the Committee to advance these bills. I am available to answer any questions you might have and can be reached at 401-721-5680 ext. 104 or mlodge@housingnetworkri.org.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melina Lodge". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melina Lodge, Executive Director