

I strongly support bill 7382. The current ordinance which has taken effect in the town of Narragansett has caused a shortage of housing for the students who attend the University of Rhode Island as well as inflated costs to live off campus. Since URI has a shortage of dorms for students beyond sophomore year, most students in their last two years of attending the University must search for housing off campus. Oftentimes this is not due to their choosing this option, but their only other choice is to transfer universities which some students actually do for this exact reason.

My son in his search for off campus housing has toured spacious 4 and 5 bedroom accommodations that will now only house 3 students. This has led to a mad scramble for housing and in many cases due to this shortage, the cost of renting has skyrocketed as well. Now, a student can expect to pay on average 1,000 to 1,100 per bedroom with utilities and other fees in addition. My son will be following the ordinance, but for those who may ignore it, they risk having the authorities knocking on their doors and possible evictions. This is beyond frightening for students living on their own for the first time. This year, my son was home sick at his cottage in Narragansett, only to have someone banging on the door loudly over and over. When he answered he was asked how many people live here? To which he replied, three. The gentleman said, "Good" and went on his way. It made me wonder what we have come to that this is considered okay.

There has been no correlation shown between the number of students living together and any problems or complaints being recorded. The only thing these ordinances do is provide less housing, make housing more costly and hurt property owners who bought these homes as investments, not knowing that these new rules would be put into place. Based on these new ordinances, not even two couples who wanted to rent a vacation home could do so in the state of Rhode Island.

I think your changes that will supersede these ordinances will continue to make housing affordable and more available to both students and the citizens of your state. Additionally, I would hope the state would continue to look for solutions for the housing shortage at your flagship University. You have an incredible research University with so much to offer, it would be great if you could invest in housing and parking infrastructure to support the university

Thank you for your time,

M. Lynne McCune
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