



*Distinctive Communities
Powerful Alliance*

February 4, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5100 – AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- STATE BUILDING CODE --
ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I write to express our support for House Bill 5100, which seeks to grant municipalities the authority to declare an emergency under limited circumstances to allow for the temporary construction and use of SAVE Units. This legislation appropriately balances the need for immediate emergency housing solutions with municipal oversight, ensuring that cities and towns can respond effectively to urgent situations while maintaining local control.

The League is particularly grateful for the enabling nature of this legislation, which aligns with our priorities of ensuring that municipalities retain the ability to address local needs in a way that best suits their unique communities. By providing exemptions from certain state fire and building codes specific to SAVE Units, H-5100 acknowledges the necessity of a rapid response framework while still requiring accountability through reporting to the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate. These provisions will ensure transparency regarding the use of SAVE Units and the populations they serve.

Furthermore, we welcome any additional input from subject matter experts, particularly those in municipal Building Departments, to ensure that the legislation remains both effective and structurally sound. Addressing emergency housing needs requires a thoughtful, collaborative approach, and H-5100 is a crucial step toward enhancing municipalities' ability to serve their residents in times of crisis.

Thank you for your attention and commitment to ensuring that Rhode Island communities have the tools necessary to respond to emergencies effectively. We commend your leadership on this critical issue and look forward to offering our support throughout the process.

We appreciate your consideration of our perspective as you work to advance H-5100.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Rossi", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing
House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi
Chief Legal Counsel Nicole McCarty