

April 10, 2025

Honorable Representative Stephen Casey
Chair, Municipal Government and Housing Committee

Re: Bill-H - 5268
Home Fit Design Bill

Representative Casey and Committee Members;

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H-5268.

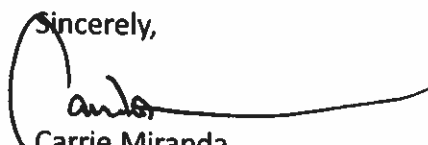
My name is Carrie Miranda, I am the Executive Director of Looking Upwards, a Newport County based non-profit agency that provides services for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. A large part of the work that we do centers on housing needs for adults with a variety of physical needs. As you can imagine, accessible and affordable housing are of special interest to our agency as many people use wheelchairs or walkers, have other mobility needs, have limited vision or have other unique needs that require accessible housing.

Since our founding in 1978, we have supported many people with disabilities to age in place by modifying homes meet their specific needs, whether it be by widening doorways, adding ramps or modifying bathrooms. These are often costly, retro fit projects, but we have found it necessary because the availability of affordable, accessible housing is limited and when it exists, the waitlists are often years long.

I am pleased to share our partnership with SWAP, Inc., a Providence based development corporation, to build a 12 unit affordable and accessible apartment complex in the heart of Jamestown. We worked closely with SWAP to ensure that the concepts of accessibility would truly meet people's needs. The combination of our years of experience working closely with people with accessibility needs and SWAP's building expertise allowed us to develop this project that did not exceed a tight budget, but ensured the needs of the disability community were considered.

This bill will ensure that individuals with disabilities or physical limitations are considered in the future of all housing in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,



Carrie Miranda
Executive Director