



March 4, 2021

Chairman Raymond A. Hull
House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: H5632 – Relating to Towns and Cities – Zoning Ordinances

Dear Chairman Hull and Members of the Committee,

I write in support of H5632: An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Zoning Ordinances.

It is gratifying to see Representative Ackerman’s encouragement of tiny homes as a viable option for the creation of much-needed housing in Rhode Island. Small homes may represent a pathway to affordable home ownership: in addition to being less expensive to build, small homes tend to have lower maintenance and utilities cost, and can be erected on small plots of land.

In fact, as members of the Committee may be aware, ONE Neighborhood Builders is nearing the completion of five small, zero-energy homes in Providence. Our Sheridan Small Homes development is the city’s first affordable housing that is Passive-House certified, and each unit will be sold to buyers who meet income thresholds. In order to qualify, buyers must earn no more than 80% of the area median income for two of the homes (about \$52,000 for a couple), and no more than 120% of area median income for the other three homes (about \$79,000).

I greatly appreciate the Committee’s commitment to finding new and innovative solutions to our state’s housing challenges. However, I hope that in considering tiny homes as a vehicle to helping municipalities meet the LMI Act requirement, that the requirement of a deed-restriction and compliance monitoring are maintained.

Only homes – regardless of size or construction technique – that are deed-restricted as affordable for low-to-moderate income buyers should be counted towards the LMI Act.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer J. Hawkins".

Jennifer Hawkins
President and Executive Director
ONE Neighborhood Builders