

March 3, 2021

The Honorable Joseph Solomon, Chairperson
House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Representative Solomon

I am pleased to support H5632, An Act Relating to Towns and Cities—Zoning Ordinances sponsored by Representatives Ackerman and Shekarchi.

I commend Representative Ackerman for sponsoring this bill which is part of a comprehensive legislative Housing Package announced this week by Speaker Shekarchi to address the state's severe housing crisis which has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. The bill would require towns and cities to allow Tiny homes to be used as accessory dwellings and to be counted as affordable housing.

The issue of affordable housing cuts across all ages. One-third of older households are housing cost burdened, meaning they are spending more than 30 percent of income on housing. One-half of older renters are housing cost-burdened. The Aging in Community Subcommittee of the Long Term Care Coordinating Council included support for alternative housing options such as accessory dwelling units as part of its Strategic Plan for addressing affordable housing for older adults. We supported prior legislation to allow development of accessory dwelling units in cities and towns and support the addition of Tiny homes to the law. Many older persons are living in homes that no longer fit their needs or find that maintaining large homes is no longer practical. Tiny homes could be a solution for some seniors wanting to downsize. Allowing the building of Tiny homes may also be a solution for families who want to keep older parents who may need just a bit of assistance close by but still giving them some privacy and independence as the Tiny home may be able to be built on existing family property.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide this testimony to support the addition of Tiny homes as Accessory Dwelling Units.

Sincerely,



Maureen Maigret, Chair
Aging in Community Subcommittee
Long Term Care Coordinating Council