

Hi, my name is Connor Smith and I am a student at Roger Williams University. As a member of the College Democrats of Rhode Island and College Democrats at RWU, I am writing in support of H. 6093.

First off, this bill allows for more affordable housing options in a time where Rhode Island might lose a representative in the next few years. Young adults like myself want to remain in Rhode Island post graduation and affordable housing is necessary for me to make that a reality.

Second, this bill specifically calls for missing middle housing in place of Single family residential housing. Missing middle housing is good for a couple reasons, it creates a community within a neighborhood while ideally being within walking distance of amenities. It would create this community by having more people living closer together while not having to be stressed about paying their next bill if the housing was more expensive. Also, Middle housing blends in well with single-family homes so this should absolutely not come with the community pushback that Mid-Rise housing would for example.

Next, The General Assembly has just passed landmark environmental policy and this bill would be an extension to that. A study by UC Berkley found that “population-dense cities contribute less greenhouse-gas emissions per person than other areas of the country, but these cities’ extensive suburbs essentially wipe out the climate benefits.”¹ The key finding of this study is that the average carbon footprint of households in dense urban cities account for 50% below the average compared to suburbs which contribute to twice the average. The unfortunate reality is that the low carbon footprint that dense urban centers create are cancelled out by their suburbs. Another Berkley study in 2018 found that Urban Infil was by far the best method of reducing Greenhouse Gasses² by 2030.

The reason of course, for the urban decrease in the Carbon footprint comes down to two main things, electricity use and commute time. Apartments allow for more efficient and less

¹ S, Robert, ers, Media relations| January 6, 2014July 9, and 2015. “Suburban Sprawl Cancels Carbon-Footprint Savings of Dense Urban Cores.” Berkeley News, November 30, 1AD. <https://news.berkeley.edu/2014/01/06/suburban-sprawl-cancels-carbon-footprint-savings-of-dense-urban-cores/>.

² “California Local Government Climate Policy Tool.” Accessed March 25, 2021. <https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/ca-scenarios/index.html>.

heating and electricity usage. Commute time would naturally be reduced as people who live in or near urban areas aren't driving as much compared to the suburbs.

Passing this bill into law can help increase Rhode Islands population and allow young students such as me to continue to live here post graduation. It will also allow this Assembly to continue their good record on climate change this session. Thank you for considering my testimony and I hope you consider passing this bill.