

April 29, 2025

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair
House Finance Committee
Rhode Island House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-6012 – A N A C T RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE EDUCATION EQUITY AND PROPERTY TAX RELIEF ACT

Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns (RILCT), I am writing to express our support for House Bill 6012. This important legislation, which includes provisions for the reimbursement of municipalities' education costs resulting from new affordable housing developments, provides critical financial relief to our cities and towns and ensures the continued success of Rhode Island's affordable housing efforts.

As outlined in the bill, municipalities that undertake the development of new affordable housing projects will be credited or reimbursed by the state for the costs of educating new or additional students who matriculate into the public education system due to these developments. This provision is especially important as municipalities are often faced with the challenge of managing budget constraints while simultaneously meeting the growing demand for public services, including education. By ensuring that local governments do not bear the full financial burden of educating new students, this reimbursement program will help ease the strain on municipal budgets and ensure that schools can continue to deliver quality education without sacrificing resources.

Furthermore, the bill makes clear that the reimbursements provided by this program will be in addition to any existing payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) that municipalities may receive, ensuring that municipalities are not penalized for their participation. This added financial support is crucial for communities with limited resources and provides them with the tools to move forward with affordable housing initiatives without fear of overwhelming their local school systems.

The Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns believes that House Bill 6012 represents a critical step toward incentivizing housing development across the state, ensuring that the educational needs of new residents are met, and protecting the fiscal health of municipalities. By providing this necessary financial relief, the state will help local governments meet the dual challenges of creating affordable housing and supporting public education for all students.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Randy R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Finance Committee