



February 10th, 2026

The Honorable Representative Marvin Abney  
Chair of the House Committee on Finance  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support for H7127, Article 6, Question 2

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

Reclaim Rhode Island supports Article 6, Question 2, which would put a bond to fund housing production on the ballot this November. We thank Governor McKee for proposing this bond, but it does not go far enough - we join housing advocates across Rhode Island in urging the legislature to increase the amount of the bond to \$150 million dollars.

Reclaim RI organizes poor and working class tenants across the state, from West Warwick to Woonsocket. Tenants are facing rents they cannot afford, eviction, homelessness, and deplorable and unsafe conditions that cause harms like the lead poisoning of children. When they organize to fight back, slumlords threaten them with eviction. We cannot allow slumlords like Elmwood Realty and Pioneer Investments to be this state's landlord of last resort: we need the public sector to take a lead role in solving this crisis.

Solving this housing crisis will require multiple approaches, new tools, and leadership with open and innovative minds. We urge the legislature to set aside substantial funding for a new generation of mixed-income public housing development as well as direct funding to the state's public housing authorities to repair and expand their traditional public housing stock. This new publicly-owned housing should also create good-paying jobs for Rhode Island construction workers building green, zero-emissions buildings.

We believe it is important to dedicate a large portion of the housing bond directly to public housing authorities and also towards a public developer. The housing bond passed in 2024 included \$10 million for public development - we are encouraged by the interest we have heard from Public Housing Authorities across the state to use this money to fund new public housing development. However, \$10 million will likely only

fund 1 or 2 projects - there is a much greater need to repair existing public housing, and build more units of public housing, which will require greater state investment, starting with this bond.

We are living in a time of severe housing crisis and also of extraordinary innovation by public housing leaders in Cambridge, MA, New York City, Atlanta, Seattle, and Montgomery County, MD. It is essential that Public Housing Authorities get their fair share of any bond that is designated for housing. We urge you to dedicate substantial portions of this housing bond to a revolving fund that will finance new mixed-income public housing in addition to financing for traditional public housing rehabilitation and expansion.

Sincerely,

**Reclaim RI**