

Dear Chairman Abney and Committee members,

My name is Veronicka Vega, I live in Woonsocket, and I am writing in support of House Bill 7127, Article 6 Question 2 - Housing and Home Ownership.

I have worked in the community development space for over 4 years and have focused on affordable housing preservation in the last 3 years. This housing bond will continue the work that has been started with the previous one - preserving affordable housing, increasing homeownership rates in RI, and creating new units of housing for all income levels.

I've lived in Woonsocket for over half my life and it has always been one of the most affordable places to own or rent in the state. That has changed since COVID-19. The quality of apartments has not improved but the rents have increased exponentially. The homes being built in Woonsocket are not starter homes, which is what people like me need and want. We need to think creatively about how to solve this housing crisis - mobile home parks, condos, cooperative housing, funding the development of starter homes, and continuing to preserve existing housing through home repair funds.

Thank you for your time,

Veronicka Vega  
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