



WRITTEN TESTIMONY
In Support of H8208 / S3019
Joint Resolution Making an Appropriation of \$200,000
to the Housing Network of Rhode Island
House Finance Committee | April 29, 2026

Chair Shekarchi, Vice Chair Tanzi, and Distinguished Members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Peter Chapman, and I serve as the President & Chief Executive Officer at One Neighborhood Builders (ONE|NB), a regional community development corporation headquartered in Providence. Founded in 1988, ONE|NB has spent nearly four decades developing affordable housing and engaging residents across Greater Providence to build safe, healthy, and vibrant communities. We are proud members of the Housing Network of Rhode Island, and I write today in strong support of H8208, the joint resolution appropriating \$200,000 to the Housing Network.

The Housing Network of Rhode Island is not a peripheral organization — it is the connective tissue of the state's affordable housing sector. As the trade association representing nonprofit housing developers, service providers, and advocates, the Housing Network coordinates the legislative, policy, and coalition work that no single organization could sustain alone. For ONE|NB and organizations like us, this advocacy infrastructure is indispensable.

The Housing Network's fingerprints are on virtually every piece of affordable housing progress Rhode Island has made in recent years, from the landmark \$120 million housing bond approved by voters in 2024, to the suite of zoning and tenant protection reforms advancing this session. This work translates directly into the resources and policy environment that allows organizations like ONE|NB to do our jobs. When the Housing Network succeeds, Rhode Island's lowest-income residents benefit.

ONE|NB's work has long depended on a combination of state and federal resources, including Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, HOME Investment Partnerships, and Community Development Block Grants. The proposed FY2026 federal budget includes the elimination of both CDBG and HOME and a 51% reduction in total HUD discretionary funding. If enacted, these cuts would represent a catastrophic loss for affordable housing organizations across Rhode Island.



While this appropriation is modest in size, it is significant in impact. The Housing Network's 2026 legislative priorities include advancing a new general obligation bond of at least \$150 million for deeply affordable housing, establishing a \$25 million state-funded rental subsidy program, and expanding by-right zoning for small multifamily homes — a package of reforms that, if successful, would generate hundreds of millions of dollars in affordable housing production statewide. The \$200,000 requested here is the investment that makes that broader advocacy possible.

With Providence vacancy rates below 3% and nearly half of Rhode Island renters cost-burdened, the urgency of this work cannot be overstated. ONE|NB respectfully urges the Committee to support H8208 and ensure that the Housing Network of Rhode Island has the resources it needs to continue this critical work.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your continued commitment to Rhode Island's affordable housing future.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Chapman".

Peter Chapman

President & Chief Executive Officer
One Neighborhood Builders