



January 25, 2024

The Honorable Stephen Casey
Chair, House Housing and Municipal Government Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Support for H7062

Dear Chair Casey, First Vice Chair Fogarty, Second Vice Chair Speakman, and Distinguished Committee Members:

RIHousing is pleased to testify in support of H7062, *An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Zoning Ordinances*. This bill would amend several sections of law relating to zoning ordinances to provide uniform zoning standards for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), streamline the process for ADU approval and clarify when ADUs should be a by-right permitted use. This bill takes an innovative approach to increasing housing production at a time when Rhode Island faces a critical shortage of affordable housing.

Meeting the housing needs of Rhode Islanders will require a range of strategies. Last year, with the leadership of Speaker Shekarchi, the General Assembly passed a package of bills that addressed a variety of barriers to housing development. This bill provides another important tool to address the shortage of affordable housing in Rhode Island.

Building ADUs will help increase the supply of housing not only for seniors, but also for low- and moderate-income families, people with disabilities, and young adults. ADUs can be a fast, relatively inexpensive and effective way of adding units to our housing stock and can often be created without expanding the footprint of an existing building.

Across the country states and cities are turning to ADU laws and ordinances as an important tool to increase the supply of housing. California, Oregon, and Washington have all passed legislation in recent years that include similar provisions as this bill and are seeing significant increases in ADU permitting activity as a result.

Rhode Island is facing a critical housing shortage, and we need every tool we can get to help increase housing production. This legislation provides such a tool and RIHousing urges the committee to support it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol Ventura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carol" and last name "Ventura" clearly legible.

Carol Ventura
Executive Director