

Good afternoon,

My name is Julia Wood and I am currently a Junior attending the University of Rhode Island who lives off campus. I am in support of House Bill H7382, and I wish to explain why in this email. This bill will reduce the current limits on renting in cities and towns across the state and will have a positive effect on the housing crisis in Rhode Island. It will also provide extremely needed housing for URI students, including myself.

Three other URI students and I, who also happen to be my good friends, currently reside at 129 Sakonnet Blvd for the 2023-2024 academic year. This housing situation worked out tremendously for us as the previous year, we were 2 sets of roommates who decided to join and live together in a practical and affordable way. Unfortunately, when the ordinance was changed to three or less people we faced many challenges that have affected us in many negative ways, including taking a toll on our friendship. I hate to see this happening all because of an ordinance that could have been avoided. It seems impractical to me to make this ordinance an odd number 3, when many people find housing through joining two sets of roommates. It also seems like an unethical money grab for college student's financial situations, as reducing the number of students allowed to live in a house has made our individual rent prices increase drastically, and makes less houses available to rent for all people, not just students, since numerically we take up more housing overall.

In order to find housing for our senior year, our choices seemed to be kicking one of us out and have the remaining three people live together, or split up two and two. Neither of these options were ideal in any way, but the first option was completely off the table because as I said earlier, we are close friends outside of simply being roommates. When searching for two person houses, we were met with limited practical options and outrageously high rent that we would be unable to afford. We are still struggling and scrambling to find housing that abides by the ordinance, that is also affordable and a practice distance from our school. If the ordinance had remained the same, we would not be in this situation and could have simply renewed our lease for the one additional year that we needed it.

I ask that you please seriously consider passing this Bill as it will avoid putting students like me in bad situations personally and financially. I understand that there are multiple factors that go into considering something like this, but please consider your empathy for others, and try to put yourselves in our shoes. Thank you for your time and consideration,

Julia Wood