



March 7, 2024

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey
Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing Committee

RE: H 7533— “An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government – Lead Hazard Mitigation”

Dear Chair Casey and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® (RIAR) to comment on H 7533, An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government – Lead Hazard and Mitigation.

As homeowners, homebuyers, and REALTORS®, it is critical for all stakeholders to play a role in protecting the health of families purchasing and renting homes in Rhode Island. RIAR will continue collaborating with elected officials on practical policies that keep Rhode Islanders healthy and safe while protecting Rhode Island’s real estate market and homeowners.

RIAR is concerned about some of the legislative proposals related to rental property that have been considered by the General Assembly recently. Several of these policy proposals would not only harm Rhode Island’s real estate industry but reduce the availability of housing in our state. For instance, H 7533 would require a property owner who is renovating their home to engage a “lead work supervisor” for a minimum of forty hours per week. While the intent of the legislation may aim to remediate lead from older commercial structures, the absence of defining “building” in the legislation could subject all homeowners to comply with H 7533 if approved by the General Assembly. **At a time when rents are soaring and the cost of homeownership is out of reach for so many residents, is it prudent for the House of Representatives to inflict more damage on Rhode Island’s housing crisis?**

Additionally, RIAR questions the role of the Department of Labor and Training as proposed in H 7533. Currently, the Department of Health is responsible for enforcing Rhode Island’s Lead Poisoning Prevention Act.¹ **Have the sponsors of H 7533 considered the negative impacts of**

¹ <https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE23/23-24.6/23-24.6-23.htm>

changing the authorizing enforcement agency and associated training and educating costs?

RIAR is concerned that these high additional costs of a development will be passed on to consumers and tenants.

As always, RIAR is prepared to work with legislators and elected officials on commonsense policies and solutions that protect Rhode Island's families and our economy. RIAR respectfully asks this committee to take no action on H 7533 at this time.

Respectfully,



Philip B. Tedesco, RCE, CAE, CIPS
Chief Executive Officer
RI Association of REALTORS®