



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Rhode Island Department of Housing
315 Iron Horse Way Ste. 101
Providence, RI 02908

March 12, 2024

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

RE: H 7983 – An Act Relating to Health and Safety – State Building Code

Dear Chairman Casey:

The Rhode Island Department of Housing supports H 7983, to establish an education and training unit to be charged with elevating familiarity and compliance with state building codes through engagement with inspectors and local officials.

Consistent compliance with building codes is essential to ensuring that Rhode Islanders are living in safe and habitable conditions. To promote consistency, a proactive approach will strengthen a shared understanding that can lead toward a uniform application of state law at the local level.

Education and training on building codes and standards fits well with the Department of Housing's focus on providing tools and resources to Rhode Island's cities and towns to reduce the administrative burden of compliance with state laws. We realize many cities and towns are understaffed and under-resourced, and the education and training unit can operate as a clearinghouse resource for local officers working to ensure all properties are in compliance. Additionally, it is important to create a reasonable timeline to ensure the efficient implementation of these efforts.

This proposal will also benefit property managers and property owners who will benefit from a predictable and reliable application of building standards across municipalities. Too often, a patchwork approach to building codes that varies from town to town can make it challenging for property managing to prioritize repairs and maintenance operations.

Sincerely,

Katuska Perez, on behalf of the Secretary of Housing Stefan Pryor
Director of Intergovernmental and Public Affairs
R.I. Department of Housing

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
The Honorable Representative Cherie Cruz
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy