



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

March 19, 2024

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

RE: In support for H 7893, *An Act Relating to Health and Safety – State Building Code*

Dear Chairman Casey:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Housing, I write in general support of House bill 7893, *An Act Relating to Health and Safety – State Building Code*, introduced by Representative Speakman.

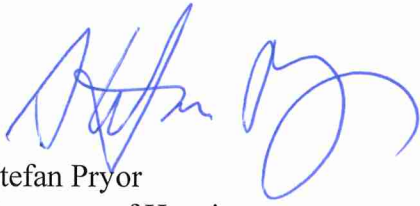
House bill 7893 would require the state building standards committee to amend the state building code to include multiple dwellings with six units or fewer under the same section as one and two family dwellings. Additionally, the bill requires the state fire marshal and the state building commissioner to develop recommendations for reconciling this change with existing fire safety and building code and for standards that enable a single-exit stairway to serve buildings up to six stories.

The proposed changes would help streamline the construction process for small scale residential projects (six units or fewer) and potentially lower cost of these projects. Preliminary data from the Census Building Permit Survey shows that Rhode Island ranks last amongst states in units permitted per capita for 2023. In a time with limited development and high demand, the Department of Housing supports legislative changes that will reduce barriers to the building of housing.

While this is an important bill and we respectfully urge your support, ensuring proper coordination is crucial particularly in addressing the technical concerns raised by the Department of Business Regulation.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Stefan Pryor
Secretary of Housing

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