



March 18, 2024

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

RE: H 7987- "An Act Relating to Towns and Cities- Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code Notice of Violations"

Dear Chair Casey and Committee Members:

On behalf of the more than 6,000 members of the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® (RIAR), we thank you for the opportunity to comment on H 7987. The legislation would require housing code enforcement officers to deliver a copy of code violations to residents impacted by a housing code violation and inform the individual of hearing dates.

RIAR appreciates the intent of the sponsors and the goal of sustaining the quality of life of homeowners and tenants alike. We can all agree that property owners should be held accountable for failure to act. However, the legislation already has a mechanism for informing tenants that a code violation has been committed. Moreover, the legislation does not define who "residents" affected by the violations are in line 1, page 2 of the legislation. RIAR seeks clarity and a clear definition of "residents."

Finally, the proposed legislation could create confusion for tenants, as H 7987 would require the code enforcement officer to "summon" occupants to appear before the municipal authority for a hearing. RIAR is concerned that the absence of tenants could delay a hearing and double or triple the violation's fine.

For these reasons, RIAR respectfully urges this committee to take no action on H 7987 as drafted.

Sincerely,

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