



95 MATHEWSON ST #204 PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
401.831.9327 / FAX 401.454.7445 / AS220.ORG

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chairman
House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Written Testimony from AS220 in Support of HB 5688 – An Act Relating to Taxation and Housing

Dear Chairman Casey and members of the Committee,

AS220 would like to register its position for HB 5688, introduced by Representatives Speakman, Casey, Kislak, and Diaz. For 40 years, AS220 has been a downtown staple, ensuring that artists are supported and remain a core component of Providence's development. In 1985, AS220 believed in this city's creative potential when first forming and over four decades continued to transform the city through our development of three mixed-use buildings in downtown Providence. AS220 is nationally recognized for innovative and effective community development through the arts. A central part of this development is our Live/Work program. All three of our buildings include housing, as well as commercial tenants and public arts and education programming. The majority of our housing is deed restricted affordable housing, but we also have some market rate units with the objective of having a mixed income ecosystem among our residents. Over 50 people live at AS220.

The inconsistencies in the application of the existing assessment and taxation law has led to AS220 being taxed differently than many of our peers, and an unpredictability that has threatened our ability to maintain this housing. We believe that predictability and consistency are crucial components of the development of more housing in our community, especially for non-traditional developers to consider incorporating housing in their projects throughout the state so that our communities can live, work, convene and create. The proposed HB 5688 will help housing providers such as AS220 continue to maintain our primarily affordable, mixed-income housing; and more importantly, will support developers considering new projects converting underutilized properties into housing. HB 5688 also improves transparency, making assessment and taxation of these properties clear and avoiding the current situation of each property owner having to negotiate the details independently. For these reasons, AS220 is in support of HB 5688.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shauna M. Duffy".

Shauna M Duffy
Co-Executive Director