



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

March 11th, 2025

RE: Support for House Bill H5798 – Attached Single-Family Dwellings (Townhomes)

Dear Chairman Casey and Members of the Committee:

Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island (“Neighbors Welcome”) is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit and grassroots network of neighbors advocating for more homes in Rhode Island. The goal of our work is to promote strong and sustainable housing production so that residents across the state, and at every stage of life, can find housing that meets their needs. **We are writing today in support of the proposed bill on attached single-family dwellings, also known as townhomes (H5798).**

H5798 will make it easier for families to buy a starter home and seniors to downsize in their community by legalizing townhomes in all residential zoning districts that allow two-family dwellings, where appropriate water and sewer infrastructure is available. Fee-simple townhomes:

- **Tend to be more affordable** than detached single-family dwellings;
- **Do not require condominium documents**; and
- **Are easier for builders to finance** compared to condominiums, making it easier to ramp up homebuilding activity.



According to 2025 YouGov polling data that Neighbors Welcome will publish on March 18th, 78% of Rhode Islanders believe that their community has too few homes that are affordable to buy or rent, and 57% identify the cost of housing as the top issue facing the state today. (Another 27% identify homeless as the top issue.) **An overwhelming majority—70%—support allowing townhomes to be built on all residentially-zoned lots.**



**If anything, the popularity of legalizing townhomes among register voters justifies amendments to make H5798 even stronger**, including by (1) allowing townhomes with any number of bedrooms, and (2) limiting off-street parking requirements, which can decrease design feasibility, to one space per household.

We applaud this bill's sponsor, Representative June Speakman, for her dedication to addressing the housing crisis in Rhode Island and ensuring that homeownership opportunities remain accessible to hardworking Rhode Islanders.

Neighbors Welcome respectfully urges the Committee to vote in support of the proposed H5798.

Sincerely,

*Claudia Wack*

Claudia Wack  
President  
Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island