



*Distinctive Communities
Powerful Alliance*

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5798 – RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- ZONING ORDINANCES

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 5798, sponsored by Chairwoman Speakman. This legislation addresses a crucial need in our state—promoting affordable housing opportunities through the construction of attached single-family dwellings in identified zoning districts.

We recognize the growing demand for lower-cost homeownership options, such as town homes, and the potential for this bill to support that demand. By allowing municipalities to permit attached single-family dwelling units where zoning already permits similar density in vertical structures (e.g., two-family or multi-family units), the bill provides a balanced approach to expanding housing opportunities in Rhode Island while respecting local planning authorities. Specifically, these types of dwellings would share a party wall and a lot line but remain independent lots, promoting responsible, sustainable growth.

We also acknowledge the unique needs and characteristics of each municipality and, as such, we are actively reviewing this bill in collaboration with our members to ensure the language effectively supports the diverse interests of our cities and towns. As we continue this review process, we look forward to working with the bill's sponsor and other stakeholders to discuss potential amendments that may offer further clarity and strengthen the legislation's impact.

The League remains steadfast in its commitment to policies that balance the need for responsible development with the principles of municipal autonomy and sound planning practices. We are confident that House Bill 5798 provides a valuable framework for municipalities to meet the housing needs of Rhode Island residents while maintaining the integrity of local governance.

Thank you for your continued efforts to address housing challenges in Rhode Island, and we look forward to working with the bill's sponsor on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Rossi", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing