



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 H5799 – Oversized Lot Splits

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 oversized lot splits (H5799).**

Bill H5799 will:

- **Empower property owners** to make their own decision about dividing a double lot;
- **Create new homebuilding opportunities** while maintaining neighborhood character; and
- **Help seniors** who are “land rich but cash poor” to age in place by selling unused land.



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—75%—support allowing property owners to divide oversized lots as long as each parcel is similarly sized to surrounding ones.**

If anything, the popularity of lot splits among registered voters justifies amendments to make H5799 even stronger, including by (1) waiving the Section 45-24-46(c)(4) notice requirements



for dimensional modifications that exceed zoned requirements, as long as the requested dimensions are equal to or less than the median dimensions of the nearby built environment, and (2) clarifying that zoning enforcement officers shall grant any such eligible requests.

We applaud this bill's sponsor, Representative Cherie Cruz, for her dedication to addressing the housing shortage and ensuring that Rhode Islanders have a safe, dignified, and affordable place to call home.

Neighbors Welcome respectfully urges the Committee to vote in support of the proposed H5799.

Sincerely,

Claudia Wack

Claudia Wack
President
Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island