



March 20, 2025

The Honorable Stephen Casey
Chair, House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Support for House bills 5793, 5801, 5802, 5803, 5804

Dear Chair Casey, First Vice Chair Fogarty, Second Vice Chair Speakman, and Distinguished Committee Members,

RIHousing is grateful for the leadership that Speaker Shekarchi and other General Assembly members have shown in continuing to make housing a top priority for the state. The General Assembly has been a key partner to help address the state's critical shortage of affordable housing. We are proud to support those efforts through our membership on the Low- and Moderate-Income Housing Commission and through the implementation of approved programs and policies.

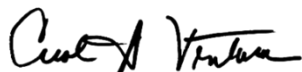
In particular, we applaud the Speaker and the sponsors of the package of twelve housing bills that were recently introduced for continuing to think creatively about how to address Rhode Island's housing challenges. Rhode Island is facing a critical housing shortage and residents continue to face rising housing costs. We look forward to working with the General Assembly and other partners in the months ahead to pass legislation that can make a real difference in creating tools and streamlining processes to address the housing crisis.

Several bills from that package of housing legislation are before this Committee tonight, including H5793, H5801, H5802, H5803 and H5804. House bill 5801 continues to refine previously passed legislation involving the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act based on input from municipalities and other stakeholders. The bill also includes important improvements such as eliminating the alternative rental calculation so that all communities are held to the 10% goal for affordable housing and limiting the ability of municipalities to restrict comprehensive permits to those that have achieved that goal. House bill 5802 would help to streamline the redevelopment of state-owned vacant, abandoned, underutilized or excess land for housing purposes. House bills 5803 and 5804 build upon previous legislation expanding the use of an electronic permitting platform for all state and local building permits, municipal zoning and planning applications and permits for DEM, DOT and CRMC applications and permits. House bill 5793 would allow new housing units to be exempt from the 4% cap on municipal levy tax growth under certain conditions including that the municipality has issued at least 10 certificates of occupancy during the tax year and that at least 10% of the units in these developments meet the definition of low and moderate income housing.

While some modifications to the bill language may be needed to refine several of these bills, each continues the General Assembly's work to address the housing crisis in Rhode Island by addressing different aspects of the challenges that are slowing housing production.

RIHousing looks forward to working with the Committee, the Speaker, and the bill sponsors to achieve the goal of increasing the supply of housing in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Ventura".

Carol Ventura
Executive Director