



March 20th, 2025

The Honorable Representative Stephen M. Casey
Chair, House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: **SUPPORT** for H5955

Dear Chairman Casey and Members of the House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing,

I am the Government Affairs Director for the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 11. We are an organization of thousands of finishing trades workers across Southern New England. I write in support of H5955, which would create a land bank so that the Department of Housing can assemble unutilized publicly-owned land to develop housing. Land is one of the most expensive factors in real estate development. All available publicly-owned land should be consolidated into a land bank so that the homes that Rhode Islanders need can be built.

This legislation would require state agencies and municipalities to provide the Department of Housing a list of real estate assets that are not in use and to share their plans, if any, for developing those assets. It would also require the Department Of Housing to assess all publicly-owned land to determine its viability to be developed for housing. The state is considering creating a public developer to build and own mixed-income housing, directly or in partnership with local public housing authorities. A land bank would greatly aid this public developer and make its work far more economically efficient.

The current process of building housing largely depends upon low wage labor, poor working conditions, and large public subsidies. H5955 would enable the Department of Housing to take steps to change this situation and ensure when public expenditure is made that workers' rights are not forgotten.

We urge your due diligence and passage of H5955.

Sincerely,
Justin Kelley

Justin Kelley

Government Affairs Director,
International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, District Council 11

**International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
District Council 11**

269 Macklin St. Cranston, RI 02920
P: (401)-467-7010; F: (401)-467-7075
www.iupatdc11.com