

March 20, 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-5958 – AN ACT 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 would like to express our general support for House Bill 5958 and the State's continued commitment to addressing the housing challenges faced by our communities. We appreciate the thoughtful approach that the bill takes in providing a framework that encourages growth and development while promoting the creation of more affordable housing options.

We recognize that our member municipalities have unique needs and characteristics, and we pledge to continue working with you and your colleagues to ensure that any additional language or provisions are tailored to address these distinctions effectively. While the bill presents a strong foundation, we are continuing to analyze its potential impacts and remain vigilant regarding any unintended effects on our diverse communities.

We are particularly mindful of the bill's provisions that would require municipalities to amend their zoning ordinances to include special provisions aimed at increasing development density and dimensional flexibility. We also acknowledge the provisions that seek to regulate commercial development and promote mixed-use overlap districts. While these goals are aligned with the broader vision for housing growth, it is crucial that we carefully assess how these mandates might be implemented across the state, given the varied needs of our municipalities.

As we work through this analysis, we stand ready to collaborate with the sponsor on any amended language that considers the implications of a "one size fits all" approach. Our goal is to ensure that this legislation continues to support all of Rhode Island's cities and towns while taking into account their unique characteristics and local governance needs.

We look forward to continuing to work together to refine and strengthen this important legislation.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to improving the housing landscape in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing