



April 2, 2025

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

Re: Opposition to House bill 5690

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

Rhode Island and Mortgage Finance Corporation ("RIHousing") respectfully opposes House bill 5690, *An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Low and Moderate Income Housing*.

House Bill 5690 would repeal the entire Rhode Island Statute entitled "Low and Moderate Income Housing". The Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (R.I. General Laws 45-53) requires most cities and towns to maintain 10% of their year-round housing stock as affordable housing. Municipalities that fail to meet that goal are subject to a streamlined Comprehensive Permit process under which developers proposing projects in which at least 25% of the units qualify as low- and moderate-income housing can seek to override local zoning requirements.

The Low & Moderate Income Housing Act was passed in 1991, modeled off the Massachusetts law known as 40B, and is the only real tool the state has to incentivize the production of affordable housing. There is no doubt that the Act could be improved to make it more effective, and indeed recent bills in Speaker Shekarchi's housing packages have done so, and more improvements have been proposed in legislation introduced this year. However, at a time when the housing supply in the state falls far short of what is needed with 26% of owner households and 48% of renter households facing housing cost burdens, we need every tool we have to spur the development of affordable housing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Ventura", is written over a horizontal line.

Carol Ventura
Executive Director

