

April 2, 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-6068 – AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I write to express our concerns regarding House Bill 6068, which would require municipalities to report to the Rhode Island Department of Housing on the availability of single-family low- or moderate-income housing for rent or ownership. This information would then be made available to the public via the Department's website and distributed to interested parties.

While we appreciate the intent of this legislation—to enhance public access to affordable housing opportunities—we believe that other entities are better suited to collect and disseminate this information. Agencies and organizations that already specialize in affordable housing programs and data collection include:

- Rhode Island Housing (RI Housing) – As the state's housing finance agency, RI Housing manages affordable housing developments, homeownership financing programs, and rental assistance initiatives. They already maintain relevant databases and partnerships with developers and landlords.
- Affordable Housing Developers & Nonprofits – Organizations such as Crossroads RI, ONE Neighborhood Builders, Pawtucket Central Falls Development, and HousingWorks RI actively track and manage affordable housing projects, making them logical sources for this data.
- Statewide Planning Program (RI Division of Planning) – This agency monitors housing trends and could incorporate affordability metrics into its planning initiatives.
- Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness – While primarily focused on homelessness, this organization maintains records on housing availability for individuals transitioning into stable housing.

Municipalities are already managing extensive responsibilities with stretched staffing and resources. Adding a new reporting mandate would divert time and effort from essential local services without significantly enhancing the accessibility of affordable housing data. Instead, we encourage collaboration with the above-listed entities to leverage their expertise in housing data collection and dissemination.

The League stands ready to work with the bill's sponsor and other stakeholders to develop a solution that achieves the goal of improving affordable housing information access while ensuring that the burden does not fall disproportionately on local governments. We welcome the opportunity for further discussions on how to construct legislation that meets these objectives more efficiently.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our perspective.

Sincerely,



Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing