



April 10, 2025

The Honorable Stephen Casey
Chair, House Committee on Municipal Government & Housing
Rhode Island State House, 82 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: Oppose HB 5268 – An Act Relating To Towns and Cities – Home-Fit Dwelling Units

Dear Chair Casey and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of One Neighborhood Builders, a Rhode Island housing and community development organization based in Providence, I write in opposition to House Bill 5268, which would require that all new construction of “covered dwellings” comply with certain design provisions. I acknowledge and am supportive of the bill’s intent to expand accessible housing options for Rhode Islanders. However, as written, the outlined standards, as well as the bill’s implementation and enforcement approach, have the opportunity to negatively impact housing development in Rhode Island.

Developing housing, especially publicly subsidized affordable housing, is complex and time- and resource-intensive. As you know, Rhode Island faces a housing shortage that we must address, in large part, through accelerated production. In recent years, the General Assembly has passed several laws aimed at streamlining housing development – these laws have already begun to simplify processes and shrink development timelines for us and other developers. This bill, as written, would impose new design standards without consideration for timeline to implementation as well as new review and approval processes. Together, these shifts would delay development timelines and increase the complexity of building housing, which ultimately will drive up cost.

One Neighborhood Builders is committed to addressing the housing shortage and contributing to the stock of accessible and adaptive housing in Rhode Island. Throughout our history, we have contributed dozens of accessible or adaptive apartments that are affordable for low-income families. Developments currently in our pipeline will contribute another 20+ accessible or adaptable apartments, including through three brand-new, elevatored apartment buildings. I welcome the opportunity to contribute to a future version of this bill aimed at our shared goal.

I am happy to talk further about these issues; please feel free to reach out to me at chapman@onenb.org.

Sincerely,

Peter H. Chapman
President & CEO, One Neighborhood Builders