

## Dawn Huntley

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**From:** Cameron LaFreniere <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2025 12:17 PM  
**To:** House Municipal Government and Housing Committee  
**Subject:** Yes to Minimum Lot Size Reform and Oversized Lot Splits (H5963 and H5964)

The Honorable Stephen Casey,

April 10th, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey  
Chair, House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Yes to Oversized Lot Splits and Minimum Lot Size Reform (H5963 and H5964)

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

As a life long Rhode Island resident who is in the middle of leaving the state due to the housing crisis and unaffordability that has made it too difficult for young professionals to raise a family in the state and achieve the American Dream, I am writing today in support of two important housing bills: H5963, which would allow oversized lots to be subdivided for new homes, and H5964, a bill that would allow homes to be built on smaller lots, particularly if the parcel is (1) close to transit and (2) served by municipal water and sewer.

According to a 2025 YouGov poll that Neighbors Welcome released in mid-March, 75% of voters support allowing a homeowner to split their existing lot if the resulting lots are similarly sized to the surrounding neighborhood.

In the same poll, 81% of Rhode Islanders support allowing smaller homes on smaller lots, particularly with access to municipal water and sewer and proximity to transit.

H5963 will help make housing more affordable by reducing minimum land requirements. Land represents approximately 60-70% of current home costs in Rhode Island.

H5964 will create new homebuilding and homeownership opportunities. By allowing smaller lot sizes, land costs, and home prices come down. This supports more Rhode Island residents to access homeownership. Allowing a range of lot sizes helps everyone find the housing option they need for their family and their life stage.

Our state has long experienced a brain drain due to a lack of economic opportunity. Those who are most apt to be job creators, those like myself in the technology industry, are also those who are most easily able to leave. Remote work, while allowing those who work in other states to move to Rhode Island, also reversely makes it easiest for those who work remotely to leave for more affordable states. Additionally, those with the greatest opportunity to create jobs in Rhode Island are also those who have the greatest ability to find jobs in other metro areas.

Personally, I've had upwards of 30 recruiters reach out to me in the past few months, landing a great job in Greater Philadelphia. I'm moving to Philadelphia, a city that has remained affordable despite proximity to two of the largest job centers in the country: DC and NYC. Philadelphia is known for row homes often only 12 feet wide, that are beloved and allow for high density without high rises. Recently the city of Providence re-legalized row homes with zero-lot lines. Row-homes, with their varying styles and beauty, create a sense of community and wonderful neighborhood character, while packing a big punch in housing affordability. Unfortunately, without passing H5963 and H5964, we won't be able to address the housing crisis with one of our biggest and most politically expedient tools: legalization of row homes state wide.

In the coming months, I will be purchasing a row home in the Philadelphia at half the cost of what a comparable property would cost in Providence. One day, if I am to return to Providence, it would only be thanks to bills like H5963 and H5964.

I want to thank the bills' sponsors for their dedication to addressing the housing crisis in Rhode Island, and I respectfully ask the Committee to vote in support of these two important changes to zoning laws that will help create much needed housing in Rhode Island.

Respectfully,

Cameron LaFreniere  
Providence

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