

Dawn Huntley

From: Cedric Ye <yec26@providencecountryday.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2025 10:57 AM
To: House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
Subject: Please Support 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: Please Support H5963 and H5964

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

My name is Cedric, I am a high school student, and I wanted to write in support of H5963, which would allow oversized lots to be subdivided for new homes, and H5964, which would allow homes to be built on smaller lots.

Currently, the Providence Metropolitan Area ranks as the single least affordable metro area in the entire country (Providence Journal). Comparing average income with average housing prices, Rhode Island is less affordable than places like San Francisco or New York City. Rhode Island's housing crisis is one of the biggest threats to our state's future, threatening to displace those with roots here, like me: as a teenager who was born and grew up in Rhode Island, I am extremely concerned about my generations ability to stay in Rhode Island at all if our housing crisis continues unchecked.

Rhode Island has such a disastrous housing crisis because we are uniquely bad at build new homes: In 2021 we ranked #50, dead last, in new housing permits per-capita. With the metro area being ranked as the third most restrictive for building housing in the nation, we need to do everything we can to reduce outdated restrictions on housing production, and H5936 and H5964 will be essential steps in combating our housing crisis.

According to a 2025 YouGov poll, 75% of voters support allowing a homeowner to split their existing lot if the resulting lots are similarly sized to the surrounding neighborhood, which is exactly what H5963 enables. With land representing 60-70% of current home costs, H5963 will be critical in enabling more projects to pencil out and get built.

81% of Rhode Islanders support allowing smaller homes on smaller lots, particularly with access to municipal water and sewer and proximity to transit, which H5964 is written to legalize. One size does not fit all; 38% of the state's land area requires two or more acres for one single-family home, which is a frankly unfeasible requirement that has contributed to our chronic shortage of housing and prevents the construction of small starter homes that lower the barrier to homeownership and building generational wealth. Allowing a range of lot sizes helps everyone find the housing option they need for their family and their life stage.

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.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Cedric Ye

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