



March 31, 2026

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

Re: House Bills 7219, 7779, and 8015

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

The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing) respectfully opposes House Bills 7219, 7779, and 8015. Each of these bills would amend state statutes involving the development and use of accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

House Bills 7219 and 7779 both grant municipalities broad new authority to impose regulations on ADUs including:

- Mandatory 5-year owner-occupancy for primary residences that contain an ADU;
- A requirement that ADUs rented to non-family members be leased only at affordable rates; and
- A size cap of 1,000 square feet for all ADUs, without the ability to seek a variance for a larger unit.

ADUs play an important role in enabling aging in place, supporting multigenerational households, providing housing for individuals with disabilities, and offering lower-cost rental options within existing neighborhoods. In 2022 and 2024, the General Assembly enacted comprehensive legislation standardizing ADU rules statewide and significantly expanding access to this type of housing, reforms that reversed decades of restrictive local practices. House Bills 7219 and 7779 would undercut that progress.

House Bill 8015 proposes to count ADUs toward a community's 10% affordable housing goal in municipalities that do not impose minimum lot-size requirements. We appreciate the sponsor's goal of incentivizing municipalities to be less restrictive when it comes to permitting ADUs. However, in recent years, the state has already significantly broadened what qualifies as low- and moderate-income housing by adding existing mobile and manufactured homes as well as rental assistance vouchers. We urge the Committee not to further lower the bar for meeting municipal housing affordability goals by including another category of housing that does not meet the definition of long-term affordable housing.

The land use legislation that has been passed in recent years has created a real opportunity to increase the housing supply using ADUs, one of the least intrusive methods of production, often within the footprint of an existing structure and without the use of scarce public subsidies. We urge the Committee to give those reforms time to be fully implemented at the local level.

Sincerely,



Carol Ventura
Executive Director, RIHousing