



**RHODE ISLAND LEAGUE  
OF CITIES AND TOWNS**

*Distinctive Communities  
Powerful Alliance*

March 31, 2026

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair  
House Municipal Government and Housing  
Rhode Island House of Representatives  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: HOUSE BILL 7374 – AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- ZONING ORDINANCES**

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding House Bill 7374, which would amend the definition of “household” within the Zoning Ordinances chapter to address the number of unrelated persons permitted to reside together in a dwelling unit.

The League appreciates the intent behind this legislation. We recognize the importance of ensuring that local zoning frameworks reflect evolving housing needs and do not unnecessarily restrict living arrangements for unrelated individuals. Clarifying how municipalities may approach occupancy standards is a worthwhile goal, particularly as communities across Rhode Island continue to navigate housing availability and affordability challenges.

We understand the challenges associated with both overcrowding and overly restrictive occupancy limits. Municipalities across Rhode Island are already navigating that balance through locally tailored ordinances tied to important health and safety considerations, including septic capacity, fire and building codes, and neighborhood infrastructure. In that context, providing clear enabling authority would help ensure that communities can continue striking this balance in a manner that reflects their specific conditions, rather than applying a uniform standard that may not account for local variation.

To that end, the League believes the bill could be strengthened by replacing the current prescriptive occupancy provisions with enabling language that provides municipalities flexibility while ensuring health and safety standards are met. We believe this approach would preserve the bill’s underlying intent while maintaining the flexibility municipalities need to account for local conditions and existing regulatory frameworks.

Thank you again for your consideration of this legislation and for the opportunity to share the League’s perspective.

Sincerely,

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing