



Testimony of Matthew Netto, AARP Rhode Island  
**In support of House Bill 8015**  
House Municipal Government & Housing Committee  
March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026

Chairmen Casey and members of the House Municipal Government & Housing Committee:

AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization with 38 million members nationwide and nearly 125,000 members here in Rhode Island. We advocate on behalf of issues that impact older adults, and we appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for affordable housing including an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) where it's a long-term rental unit in a municipality with no ordinance requiring a minimum lot size for ADUs as Representative Speakman's House Bill 8015 does.

Accessory apartments, sometimes called accessory dwelling units, or ADUs, have potential to improve the lives of older adults, family caregivers, and people of all ages. According to AARP Rhode Island's November 2023 Vital Voices Survey over half (53%) of Rhode Island residents age 45+ would consider creating an ADU if the space was available. In addition, a strong majority (79%) of Rhode Island residents age 45+ strongly or somewhat support town ordinances that make it easier for property owners to create an ADU.

According to the 2024 AARP Home and Community Preferences Survey, approximately 75% of adults 50-plus indicate they would consider moving into an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) for one or more reasons, such as to live close to someone (64%), if they needed help with everyday activities (61%), to live close to someone who needed care (55%), to lower their housing costs (54%), or to downsize (47%).

AARP's 2023 Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Scorecard ranks Rhode Island 51st, or dead last, in the country for Housing for Older Adults. In addition, AARP's 2023 Livability Index gave Rhode Island an overall housing score of 40. The national average is 48. Rhode Island is in the midst of a housing crisis. Older adults bear the brunt of that crisis since many are living on a fixed income or have limited ability to increase their income.

Unable to keep up with rising costs many older Rhode Islanders are being forced to leave their homes and communities. House Bill 8015 expands access to ADUs for many Rhode Island homeowners, while also creating a mechanism that allows municipalities to count them towards their affordable housing



goals. This bill works for homeowners and incentivizes municipalities by helping them reach their goals. We urge you to recommend passage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt R Netto".

Matthew Netto  
Associate State Director-AARP Rhode Island