



**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 8036 – AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- RESTORING OPTIONS IN OCCUPANCY MODELS (ROOM) ACT**

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write regarding House Bill 8036, which seeks to expand access to inherently affordable housing by re-legalizing co-living, single-room occupancy (SRO), and other shared dwelling models.

We appreciate the sponsor's willingness to meet with the League and open a constructive dialogue on this legislation. As Rhode Island continues to face ongoing housing challenges, we recognize that proposals such as this aim to introduce additional housing options that may help address affordability concerns.

At the same time, municipalities must carefully balance these opportunities with local considerations related to zoning, infrastructure, and neighborhood impacts. As discussed, we believe the bill could be strengthened through targeted amendments that better align with municipal planning practices. In particular, allowing these housing models in appropriate commercial zones, rather than broadly within residential zones, may provide a more practical pathway for implementation while minimizing potential conflicts.

Additionally, several of our member municipalities have raised concerns regarding the interaction of this proposal with existing student housing dynamics. In communities where student occupancy is already a significant factor, it is important to ensure that any new framework does not unintentionally exacerbate existing pressures on neighborhoods or local services.

The League and our members remain committed to working collaboratively with the sponsor as this legislation moves through the process and look forward to continued dialogue on refinements that support both housing goals and the needs of municipalities.

Sincerely,

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing