



March 31, 2026

The Honorable Stephen Casey
Chair, House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence RI 02903

RE: Support of H8039

Dear Chairman Casey and Members of the Committee,


On behalf of the Housing Network of Rhode Island, thank you for the opportunity to offer our conceptual support on **H8039**, legislation that amends zoning ordinances to allow attached single family dwelling units in designated districts and enables subdivisions of substandard lots with multiple dwellings.

Rhode Island faces a well-documented and persistent shortage of affordable homes. Earlier this month, the National Low Income Housing Coalition, of which we are a state partner, released their annual report *"The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes,"* showing Rhode Island has a gap of 23,222 rental homes that are affordable and available to the lowest income renters. Addressing this challenge requires coordinated action across all levels of government, along with strong partnerships between municipalities, housing developers, community-based organizations, and the private sector.

H8039 recognizes the urgency of increasing housing opportunities and reflects a commitment to meeting residents where they are. By advancing policies that support housing stability and accessibility, the legislation has the potential to reduce housing insecurity, prevent displacement, and promote stronger, more resilient communities. One of the most important aspects of this bill is its focus on expanding pathways to housing for those who are most impacted by the current shortage. The need for targeted and effective solutions is clear, and **H8039** incorporates more responsive and flexible approaches to addressing housing needs. In a market that continues to evolve, it is critical that policy tools are designed to adapt and to remove unnecessary barriers that can slow down or prevent housing production and access.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support **H8039**. I am available to answer any questions you might have and can be reached at 401-721-5680 ext. 104 or mlodge@housingnetworkri.org.

Respectfully submitted,


Melina Lodge, MCP
Executive Director