



Executive Office of Housing
State of Rhode Island
One Capitol Hill, 3rd Floor
Providence, RI 02908

April 7, 2026

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

RE: H 7446 and H 8032

Dear Chairman Casey:

The Executive Office of Housing (“EOH”) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on House Bills 7446 and 8032, which would amend the Low- and Moderate-Income Housing (“LMIH”) Act to eliminate density bonuses for areas used for drinking water. H 8032 specifies that density bonuses would not be allowed in areas classified as GAA, while H 7446 eliminates the density bonus in all areas classified as GA or GAA. The bills would also require that evidence be provided as to the available capacity of the public sewer and water systems in advance of receiving a density bonus. EOH respectfully submits this letter of concern.

While we understand and appreciate the importance of protecting the state’s public drinking water supply, EOH is concerned that these pieces of legislation are overly broad and will limit the state’s ability to meet our housing goals and increase housing affordability across all income levels. *Housing 2030*, the state guide plan housing element, establishes production goals for each municipality based on their proximity to jobs and transit. These bills may prevent some municipalities from achieving those goals by preventing the usage of the density bonus incentive in more than 20% (in H 8032) or more than 90% of the state’s land area (in H 7446).

As a procedural matter, the requirement to demonstrate water and sewer capacity to be eligible for the density bonuses at the time of project design is not in line with when a project is required to receive a water permit in the standard permitting process. This creates uncertainty and additional risk for developers to spend money designing projects for densities that they may not be eligible for.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and welcome the chance to discuss our concerns with the Committee and bill sponsors.

Sincerely,

Deborah J. Goddard
Secretary of Housing

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
The Honorable Representative Megan L. Cotter
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy