

Dear Committee clerk Huntley,

I vehemently oppose House Bill H8363.

As a proud Rhode Islander, a graduate of the University of Rhode Island, and a professional Realtor, I strongly oppose this legislation for the following reasons:

1. **Discrimination Against a Class of People** This bill effectively creates a separate regulatory category based solely on tenant identity—students. Housing policy should be based on property standards and safety, not on who occupies the home. Targeting students sets a concerning precedent of discrimination.

2. **Excessive Government Overreach**

H8363 grants municipalities broad authority to impose licensing requirements, fees, and penalties on homeowners. This represents an overreach that undermines fundamental property rights and local housing flexibility.

3. **Unfair Burden on Homeowners**

Many Rhode Island homeowners rely on renting to students for part of the year while occupying their homes at other times. This bill penalizes those responsible property owners who are contributing to the housing supply and maintaining their properties.

4. **Disproportionate Impact on Individuals, Not Institutions** The bill imposes additional restrictions and costs primarily on individual homeowners rather than large institutions. This creates an uneven playing field and discourages small-scale housing providers.

5. **Inconsistent and Confusing Application** The bill introduces unclear standards and inconsistent enforcement. For example, if a non-student resides in the home alongside students, the property may be treated differently. This ambiguity creates compliance challenges and legal uncertainty.

6. **Negative Economic Impact**

Students living off-campus are vital contributors to Rhode Island's local economy—supporting restaurants, coffee shops, and small businesses. Off-campus housing availability is also a key factor in attracting students to institutions like URI.

By adding costs, restrictions, and barriers, this bill will:

Reduce available housing supply

Increase rental prices

Discourage property owners from renting

Potentially impact university enrollment and local economic activity

At a time when Rhode Island is already facing a housing shortage, we should be working to expand housing opportunities—not restrict them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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