



March 3, 2026

Dear Chair DiPalma and Members Senate Finance Committee.

**Re: H7127 Article 6. Capital Development Program, Question 2**

SACRI strongly supports the proposed \$120,000,000 bond to “increase and preserve the availability of affordable and accessible housing to meet the needs of all Rhode Islanders and support community revitalization through the redevelopment of existing structures, new construction, property acquisition, and infrastructure improvements. We feel that the \$120Million is the minimum needed to continue to address the state’s housing crisis.

As you consider this bond proposal we ask that the housing needs of our older population – now representing 20% of our state population and projected to grow to 25% by 2030 -- be given attention in the allocation of the housing bond funds.

SACRI urges you to consider requiring a goal of targeting 30% of the bond funds to be used to develop housing to benefit “special needs” households including, but not limited to, those experiencing homelessness, the disabled and/or . Such a requirement had been included in the regulations adopted by the Housing Resources Commission for the former Building Homes RI bond proceeds. (860-RICR-10-00-1 Title 860 – Housing Resources Commission)

***A GREATER FOCUS ON HOUSING NEEDS OF OLDER RI’ERS IS NEEDED!***

In our surveys, older adults tell us issues relating to housing affordability and accessibility present significant challenges. One-fifth of our state’s older households have income less than \$20,000; 46% less than \$50,00 (US Census.) Fifty-two percent of older renters are housing cost burdened paying 30% or more of their income on rent as are 32% of those in owner occupied housing (US Census). The ELDER INDEX shows housing costs comprise the largest portion of older RIers monthly expenses. And **43% of the state’s extremely low-income renter households are seniors** (National Low Income Housing Coalition). And the number of homeless older adults has been increasing.

In addition to creating more affordable housing for older adults, more accessible housing is needed. In a March 2025 review of housing developments for the elderly and persons with disabilities financed through RI Housing in the last five years, SACRI found of the 2,194 units listed, only 8% were for accessible units. And housing managers reported wait list of 5 years plus for accessible units.

Thank you for your consideration of our support and our request for targeting a goal of 30% of bond proceeds for development of “special needs” housing to include older adults.

Sincerely,  
Carol Anne Costa, SACRI Executive Director