



May 19, 2026

The Honorable Louis DiPalma, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: S3151- HISTORICAL PRESERVATION TAX CREDITS

Dear Chairperson and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® (RIAR), we respectfully submit this testimony in support of S3151. RIAR represents more than 5,900 licensed real estate professionals who work every day in the listing, sale, leasing, management, and appraisal of residential and commercial real estate and who are committed to fair housing practices, consumer protection, and stable housing markets, to make Rhode Island a better place to call home.

Rhode Island continues to face a significant housing shortage across all price points. Expanding tools that support the creation of new housing units while preserving existing structures is essential to improving inventory and maintaining the character of our communities.

S3151 enhances the state's historic preservation tax credit by increasing the base credit to 30% of qualified rehabilitation expenditures for projects that dedicate at least 80% of space to multi-family housing. The bill further increases the credit to 35% for projects that include an affordable housing component and extends the program's sunset to 2031.

Unlocks Immediate Housing Production Through Adaptive Reuse

Strategic reuse of existing structures offers one of the fastest and most efficient paths to increasing housing supply.

- Encourages the conversion of underutilized historic properties into multi-family housing.
- Enables new housing creation without the need for additional land development.
- Maximizes existing infrastructure and community assets to deliver units more quickly.

Adaptive reuse accelerates housing production while making efficient use of Rhode Island's existing built environment.

Modernizes Historic Preservation to Meet Today's Housing Needs

S3151 aligns preservation policy with the state's urgent need for additional housing.

- Integrates housing production goals directly into preservation incentives.
- Ensures historic structures remain economically viable and actively used.
- Supports revitalization efforts while maintaining Rhode Island's architectural character.

Aligning preservation with housing policy ensures historic assets remain both protected and productive.

Drives Meaningful Affordable Housing Outcomes

Enhanced incentives are critical to advancing affordability within complex redevelopment projects.

- Establishes a stronger 35% credit to encourage inclusion of affordable units.
- Helps close financing gaps that often limit affordable housing development.
- Expands access to housing for residents across a range of income levels.

Stronger incentives directly translate into more achievable and sustainable affordable housing outcomes.

Bridges Financing Gaps in High-Cost Rehabilitation Projects

A stable and predictable policy framework is essential for advancing large-scale redevelopment projects.

- Extends the program sunset to 2031, enabling long-term planning and financing.
- Encourages a consistent pipeline of rehabilitation and housing production projects.
- Reinforces Rhode Island's commitment to sustained economic and community development.

Long-term program stability is key to unlocking sustained private investment and consistent housing production.

Provides Long-Term Certainty to Sustain Investment and Development

Historic redevelopment often involves unique and unpredictable costs that can stall projects without adequate support.

- Offsets rising material, labor, and compliance costs tied to historic properties.
- Improves project feasibility for developments that would otherwise not move forward.
- Attracts private capital into projects that deliver both housing and preservation benefits.

Targeted financial support ensures that otherwise unviable projects can move forward and deliver needed housing.

Conclusion

S3151 represents a thoughtful and strategic expansion of a proven tool that supports both historic preservation and housing production. By strengthening incentives, aligning redevelopment with housing priorities, and providing long-term program stability, this legislation will help Rhode Island better address its housing shortage while preserving its unique historic character.

For these reasons, the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® respectfully urges passage of S3151.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Trevor J. Chasse
Director, Government Affairs
Rhode Island Association of REALTORS®