



**Testimony from Ross Connolly  
Northeast Regional Director, Americans for Prosperity  
Senate Committee on Housing & Municipal Government  
April 2, 2026**

**RE: Testimony on behalf of Americans for Prosperity Before the Senate Committee on Housing & Municipal Government on S. 2265: An Act Relating To Towns And Cities -- Zoning Ordinances**

**Honorable Chair Bissaillon, Vice Chair DiMario, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing & Municipal Government:**

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity-Rhode Island, we are pleased to support S. 2265, “An Act Relating To Towns And Cities -- Zoning Ordinances.”

This legislation would reduce minimum lot size requirements across Rhode Island, removing barriers to building starter homes and increasing housing supply for Rhode Island families. Home prices in Rhode Island [have increased](#) by over 60% since 2019, with every city in the Ocean State now [unaffordable](#) for the median Rhode Island household. Households [need](#) an income of nearly \$160,000 to afford the median priced single-family home without being cost-burdened, nearly double the state’s median household income.

S. 2265 would address rising housing costs by reducing minimum lot size requirements. to 2,500 square feet for residential lots within one quarter mile of public transit and connected to public water and sewer, 5,000 square feet for all other residential lots served by public water and sewer, and one acre for all residential lots not connected to public water and sewer. These reforms would allow smaller and more affordable homes to be built, while still ensuring adequate utilities and infrastructure and retaining local control over zoning and other requirements.

Excessive minimum lot size requirements limit the amount of housing that can be built, reducing supply and driving up home prices. Large minimum lot sizes also limit the supply of smaller starter homes, as larger homes tend to be built on larger lots. 43% of lot sizes in Rhode Island are [at least](#) two acres, and 60% are at least one acre. Less than 10% of residential lot sizes in Rhode Island are under one quarter of an acre.

Yet, lot sizes were not always mandated to be this large. Minimum lot sizes regulations did not come into [widespread](#) use until the 1940s, and smaller lot sizes were once common across Rhode Island. However, smaller lots are now illegal in many places, effectively legislating out of

existence quaint New England downtowns, as well as starter homes for young families. Importantly, S. 2265 would reduce the minimum lot size, but would not mandate small lots. Homeowners and developers could still build homes on large lots, but they would no longer be required to do so.

Other states and cities across the nation have been reducing minimum lot sizes in recent years. In 2025, Maine reduced minimum lot sizes to 5,000 square feet for lots connected to public sewer and water, and Texas reduced minimum lot sizes to just 3,000 square feet for new developments in large cities. In 1998, Houston reduced minimum lot sizes to 1,400 square feet downtown and expanded the reform citywide in 2013. The city's reform has enabled over 80,000 homes on smaller lots to be built, and Houston remains one of America's most affordable big cities. S. 2265 makes important progress reducing barriers to affordable housing and combatting Rhode Island's housing shortage.

For these reasons, Americans for Prosperity-Rhode Island respectfully urges the Legislature to support S. 2265 to expand housing opportunities and foster a more competitive, affordable housing market.

Sincerely,

**Ross Connolly**  
**Northeast Regional Director**  
**Americans for Prosperity**