



April 2, 2026

The Honorable Jacob Bissaillon
Chair, Senate Housing and Municipal Government
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence RI 02903

Re: Support for Senate Bill 2272

Dear Chair Bissaillon and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Housing Network of Rhode Island, I am writing to express support for Senate Bill 2272 – Multifamily Housing Act. The Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI) is a statewide alliance of members and partners serving low-income Rhode Islanders, who share the vision that all Rhode Islanders live in safe, healthy, affordable homes in thriving communities. Our alliance includes 19 nonprofit housing developers who own and operate more than 7,500 rental homes for low- and moderate-income Rhode Islanders.

Rhode Island continues to face a severe housing shortage that is impacting families, employers, and communities across the state. Addressing this crisis will require a range of solutions that increase housing supply at different price points and in different community contexts. Senate Bill 2272 represents an important step forward by expanding opportunities for “middle housing” — including duplexes and other small-scale, multi-unit homes — in municipalities with populations over 40,000.

Allowing middle housing in areas currently zoned exclusively for single-family homes helps to gently increase density in a way that is compatible with existing neighborhoods. These housing types can provide more attainable options for working families, older adults looking to downsize, and young people seeking to remain in the communities where they grew up. By creating more diverse housing options, this legislation supports more inclusive, vibrant, and economically resilient communities.

At a time when Rhode Island must act with urgency to address its housing challenges, Senate Bill 2272 offers another approach to expanding housing opportunity while supporting long-term affordability goals. I respectfully encourage the Committee to support this legislation. If there are any questions, I can be reached at 401-721-5680 ext 104 or mlodge@housingnetworkri.org.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melina Lodge".

Melina Lodge, MCP
Executive Director