

April 2, 2026

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

RE: SENATE BILL 2274 – RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING

Dear Chair Bissaillon and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns and our 39 member municipalities, we offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill 2274.

We recognize the continued importance of addressing housing availability and affordability across Rhode Island. At the same time, Senate Bill 2274 provides municipalities with critical tools to ensure that new housing developments are aligned with local needs, resources, and infrastructure capacities.

The bill's clarification of "consistent with local needs" is particularly important. It allows local review boards to evaluate proposed projects in consideration of:

- The state and local need for low- and moderate-income housing
- The impact on existing low-income residents
- Public health and safety concerns for both new and existing residents
- Impacts on the public school system, public transportation, and other infrastructure
- Site and building design compatibility with surrounding areas
- Preservation of open spaces
- Application of zoning or land use regulations consistently across subsidized and unsubsidized housing

This comprehensive set of criteria strengthens municipalities' ability to ensure that development supports both housing goals and community sustainability.

The bill also establishes a thoughtful process for "substantial multi-family housing projects," defined as projects with 60 or more units in municipalities with populations under 40,000. By requiring pre-application conferences, detailed project submissions, and documentation showing consistency with local needs, municipalities are provided with early insight and opportunity to coordinate across planning, public safety, and infrastructure departments.

Additionally, the requirement that decisions on substantial projects be made by a majority of the entire review board ensures deliberative, representative decision-making and reinforces public trust in the local review process.

Senate Bill 2274 represents a careful balance between supporting housing production and protecting the health, safety, and infrastructure of Rhode Island communities. By giving municipalities clear standards and procedural tools, it allows local leaders to approve responsible development while ensuring sustainable growth.

For these reasons, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns supports Senate Bill 2274 and urges its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of Senate Housing and Municipal Government