



The Honorable Jacob Bissaillon
Chair, Senate Committee on Housing & Municipal Government
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

April 1, 2026

RE: Support for S2907, Technical Fixes Amendments

Dear Chairman Bissaillon and Members of the Committee:

Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island (“Neighbors Welcome”) is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit and network of neighbors advocating for more homes in Rhode Island. Our goal is to promote strong and sustainable housing production so that residents across the state and at every stage of life have housing options that meet their needs.

We are writing today in support of S2907, which addresses several minor issues from prior-year housing legislation. Refining these items will enable Rhode Island to build homes more effectively. The General Assembly has done significant work in the last several years to address the state’s housing shortage. Yet solving a problem of the scale that we face will necessarily be a multi-year effort with ongoing lessons learned.

S2907 would clarify several important pieces of previously passed legislation to ensure that implementation is successful. Specifically, the bill will:

- Clarify that the definition of “gross floor area” in the state accessory dwelling unit (ADU) law has the same meaning as in the state building code.
- Clarify that ADU size standards are an allowance, not a requirement. (I.e., a one-bedroom ADU is allowed to be up to 900 square feet in size, but it is not required to be that large.)
- Clarify that an accessory structure must lawfully exist for three (3) years before a property owner may apply for an ADU conversion, closing the “build-to-convert” loophole that previously allowed for immediate conversions. At the same time, the bill makes additional homeowners eligible to build a detached ADU in recognition that eligibility should not be limited to wealthier households who own a quarter-acre or more.
- Address how recent subdivision law changes apply to substandard lots containing multiple residential buildings. These properties can be difficult to finance because of their



unusual layout, whereas allowing each structure to be owned separately will make it easier to reinvest in and preserve these homes.

- Spell out how last year's single-family townhomes bill interacts with local regulations, making implementation easier for cities and towns. The bill clarifies that dimensional regulations related to lot creation do not apply to individual townhome lots, as long as the overall development is at permitted levels of density, but that other local development regulations still apply.

We thank Senator Gu, the Chair, and their cosponsors for their dedication to addressing the housing shortage and the members of the Committee for hearing this bill today. Neighbors Welcome respectfully urges the Committee to support S2907.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristina Brown", is positioned above the typed name.

Kristina Brown
Executive Director
Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island