

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Friday, May 10, 2024**

## **Rhode Island Lawmakers Join Housing Network of Rhode Island and South County Habitat for Humanity for Legislative Build Day**

**Hopkinton, RI** – Rhode Island lawmakers rolled up their sleeves alongside the Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI) and the South County Habitat for Humanity today during a special legislative build day. Senator Bridget Valverde, Senator Victoria Gu, Representative Julie Casimiro, and Representative Matthew Dawson worked together with other volunteers to construct a home for a local South County family in need of safe and affordable housing.

The home being constructed is part of the Cardinal Lane development, a community consisting of seven single-family homes for families with household incomes at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). This initiative underscores the collective commitment of legislators, public and private developers, individuals and advocates to address the pressing need for affordable housing in Rhode Island.

“We are thrilled to partner with members of the General Assembly and the South County Habitat for Humanity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of local families,” said Melina Lodge, Executive Director of the Housing Network of Rhode Island. “By coming together today, we’re building not only housing, but also hope and stability for those in our community who need it most.”

Legislators and volunteers did not need prior building experience to participate in the build day. They received comprehensive training, tools, and safety equipment to ensure a productive and fulfilling experience on-site.

“We are grateful for the support and enthusiasm of the members of the General Assembly who joined us for this event,” said South County Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Colin Penney. “Their dedication to serving our community and addressing the critical need for affordable housing is truly commendable. Together, we can create lasting positive change for local families.”

This collaborative effort exemplifies the power of partnership and community engagement in addressing housing challenges and fostering inclusive, thriving communities. Through initiatives like this, the Housing Network of Rhode Island and its member organizations are working towards a future where every Rhode Islander has access to safe, healthy, and affordable homes.

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**The Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI)** is the state's membership organization for agencies committed to developing affordable housing and vital communities. Currently composed of 19 community development corporations and affordable housing developers, our members have created thousands of affordable housing units from Westerly to Woonsocket and are leading community revitalization and economic development efforts across our state. Their wide array of activities— including real estate development, financial asset building, housing counseling, resident empowerment and engagement, and much more— create tangible community change and transform the lives of Rhode Islanders.

HNRI members include: Church Community Housing Corporation, Crossroads Rhode Island, Foster Forward, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence and East Bay, House of Hope Community Development Corporation, Jonnycake Center, NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley, Omni Development Corporation, ONE Neighborhood Builders, Pawtucket Central Falls Development, Pawtucket Housing Authority, Providence Revolving Fund, Sojourner House, South County Habitat for Humanity, SWAP (Stop Wasting Abandoned Property) Inc., Valley Affordable Housing Corporation, WARM Center, West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation & Women's Development Corporation