



HOUSING NETWORK
OF RHODE ISLAND



Statement from Housing Network of Rhode Island Executive Director Melina Lodge on Governor McKee's Proposed FY26 Budget

WARWICK, RI – The Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI) and Homes RI are pleased to see the Governor's proposed FY 26 budget address the critical issue of homelessness with the inclusion of much needed financial resources.

Additional proposals, such as closing the short term rental loophole by applying the 5 percent hotel tax to whole-home short-term rentals, increasing the real estate conveyance tax for properties above \$800,000, and allocating additional revenue to the Housing Resources and Homelessness fund, are positive steps toward creating a more equitable housing landscape for all Rhode Islanders.

While we commend the proposed \$15.7 million for homelessness initiatives and the creation of two new funding sources to address our unhoused crisis, we also recognize the need for sustained investments in long-term solutions. As Rhode Islanders face rising home and rental costs, limited affordable housing options, and increasing rates of homelessness, sustained efforts are needed to expand affordable housing opportunities. With State Fiscal Recovery Funds—intended to help propel Rhode Island's rebound from the pandemic by expanding the availability of low and moderate income housing stock—winding down, it's critical that future funding not only address emergency responses, but also continue to prioritize the production and preservation of affordable housing for low income households.

The resources made available by the \$120 million housing bond passed by voters in November provide us the opportunity to ensure that we are prioritizing the most acute housing needs first and investing our scarce state resources into the development and preservation of homes that the market cannot produce without state subsidies.

Alongside our member organizations, HNRI remains committed to working collaboratively with policymakers, advocates, and community stakeholders to develop and implement people-centered solutions that ensure all Rhode Islanders have access to safe, affordable, and stable homes.

###

The Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI) is a membership organization made up of 19 community development corporations and affordable housing developers. Together,

our members are dedicated to building affordable housing and strengthening communities across the state.

###