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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND HOUSING  
RESOURCES ACT OF 1998--MOBLIE HOMES--TOWN OF COVENTRY

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Kettle, and P Fogarty

Date Introduced: February 05, 2015

Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-128-8.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-128 entitled "Rhode  
2 Island Housing Resources Act of 1998" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-128-8.1. Housing production and rehabilitation.** -- (a) Short title. - This section  
4 shall be known and may be cited as the "Comprehensive Housing Production and Rehabilitation  
5 Act of 2004."

6 (b) Findings. - The general assembly finds and declares that:

7 (1) The state must maintain a comprehensive housing strategy applicable to all cities and  
8 towns that addresses the housing needs of different populations including, but not limited to,  
9 workers and their families who earn less than one hundred twenty percent (120%) of median  
10 income, older citizens, students attending institutions of higher education, low and very low  
11 income individuals and families, and vulnerable populations including, but not limited to, persons  
12 with disabilities, homeless individuals and families, and individuals released from correctional  
13 institutions.

14 (2) Efforts and programs to increase the production of housing must be sensitive to the  
15 distinctive characteristics of cities and towns, neighborhoods and areas and the need to manage  
16 growth and to pace and phase development, especially in high growth areas.

17 (3) The state in partnership with local communities must remove barriers to housing  
18 development and update and maintain zoning and building regulations to facilitate the

1 construction, rehabilitation of properties and retrofitting of buildings for use as safe affordable  
2 housing.

3 (4) Creative funding mechanisms are needed at the local and state levels that provide  
4 additional resources for housing development, because there is an inadequate amount of federal  
5 and state subsidies to support the affordable housing needs of Rhode Island's current and  
6 projected population.

7 (5) Innovative community planning tools, including, but not limited to, density bonuses  
8 and permitted accessory dwelling units, are needed to offset escalating land costs and project  
9 financing costs that contribute to the overall cost of housing and tend to restrict the development  
10 and preservation of housing affordable to very low income, low income and moderate income  
11 persons.

12 (6) The gap between the annual increase in personal income and the annual increase in  
13 the median sales price of a single-family home is growing, therefore, the construction,  
14 rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable, multi-family housing needs to increase to provide  
15 more rental housing options to individuals and families, especially those who are unable to afford  
16 homeownership of a single-family home.

17 (7) The state needs to foster the formation of cooperative partnerships between  
18 communities and institutions of higher education to significantly increase the amount of  
19 residential housing options for students.

20 (8) The production of housing for older citizens as well as urban populations must keep  
21 pace with the next twenty-year projected increases in those populations of the state.

22 (9) Efforts must be made to balance the needs of Rhode Island residents with the ability  
23 of the residents of surrounding states to enter into Rhode Island's housing market with much  
24 higher annual incomes at their disposal.

25 (c) Strategic plan. - The commission, in conjunction with the statewide planning  
26 program, shall develop by July 1, 2006, a five (5) year strategic plan for housing, which plan shall  
27 be adopted as an element of the state guide plan, and which shall include quantified goals,  
28 measurable intermediate steps toward the accomplishment of the goals, implementation activities,  
29 and standards for the production and/or rehabilitation of year-round housing to meet the housing  
30 needs including, but not limited to, the following:

31 (1) Older Rhode Islanders, including senior citizens, appropriate, affordable housing  
32 options;

33 (2) Workers, housing affordable at their income level;

34 (3) Students, dormitory, student housing and other residential options;

- 1 (4) Low income and very low income households, rental housing;  
2 (5) Persons with disabilities, appropriate housing; and  
3 (6) Vulnerable individuals and families, permanent housing, single room occupancy  
4 units, transitional housing and shelters.

5 (d) As used in this section and for the purposes of the preparation of affordable housing  
6 plans as specified in chapter 45-22.2, words and terms shall have the meaning set forth in chapter  
7 45-22.2, chapter 45-53, and/or § 42-11-10, unless this section provides a different meaning or  
8 unless the context indicates a different meaning or intent.

9 (1) "Affordable housing" means residential housing that has a sales price or rental  
10 amount that is within the means of a household that is moderate income or less. In the case of  
11 dwelling units for sale, housing that is affordable means housing in which principal, interest,  
12 taxes, which may be adjusted by state and local programs for property tax relief, and insurance  
13 constitute no more than thirty percent (30%) of the gross household income for a household with  
14 less than one hundred and twenty percent (120%) of area median income, adjusted for family  
15 size. In the case of dwelling units for rent, housing that is affordable means housing for which the  
16 rent, heat, and utilities other than telephone constitute no more than thirty percent (30%) of the  
17 gross annual household income for a household with eighty percent (80%) or less of area median  
18 income, adjusted for family size. Affordable housing shall include all types of year-round  
19 housing, including, but not limited to, manufactured housing, [mobile homes as defined in § 31-](#)  
20 [44.2-2 which are situated in the town of Coventry only](#), housing originally constructed for  
21 workers and their families, accessory dwelling units, housing accepting rental vouchers and/or  
22 tenant-based certificates under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended,  
23 and assisted living housing, where the sales or rental amount of such housing, adjusted for any  
24 federal, state, or municipal government subsidy, is less than or equal to thirty percent (30%) of  
25 the gross household income of the low and/or moderate income occupants of the housing.

26 (2) "Affordable housing plan" means a plan prepared and adopted by a town or city  
27 either to meet the requirements of chapter 45-53 or to meet the requirements of § 45-22.2-10(f),  
28 which require that comprehensive plans and the elements thereof be revised to conform with  
29 amendments to the state guide plan.

30 (3) "Approved affordable housing plan" means an affordable housing plan that has been  
31 reviewed and approved in accordance with § 45-22.2-9.

32 (4) "Moderate income household" means a single person, family, or unrelated persons  
33 living together whose adjusted gross income is more than eighty percent (80%) but less than one  
34 hundred twenty percent (120%) of the area median income, adjusted for family size.

1 (5) "Seasonal housing" means housing that is intended to be occupied during limited  
2 portions of the year.

3 (6) "Year-round housing" means housing that is intended to be occupied by people as  
4 their usual residence and/or vacant units that are intended by their owner for occupancy at all  
5 times of the year; occupied rooms or suites of rooms in hotels are year-round housing only when  
6 occupied by permanent residents as their usual place of residence.

7 (e) The strategic plan shall be updated and/or amended as necessary, but not less than  
8 once every five (5) years.

9 (f) Upon the adoption of the strategic plan as an element of the state guide plan, towns  
10 and cities shall bring their comprehensive plans into conformity with its requirements, in  
11 accordance with the timetable set forth in § 45-22.2-10(f), provided, however, that any town that  
12 has adopted an affordable housing plan in order to comply with the provisions of chapter 45-53,  
13 which has been approved for consistency pursuant to § 45-22.2-9, shall be deemed to satisfy the  
14 requirements of the strategic plan for low and moderate income housing until such time as the  
15 town must complete its next required comprehensive community plan update.

16 (g) Guidelines. - The commission shall advise the state planning council and the state  
17 planning council shall promulgate and adopt not later than July 1, 2006, guidelines for higher  
18 density development, including, but not limited to: (A) inclusionary zoning provisions for low  
19 and moderate income housing with appropriate density bonuses and other subsidies that make the  
20 development financially feasible; and (B) mixed-use development that includes residential  
21 development, which guidelines shall take into account infrastructure availability; soil type and  
22 land capacity; environmental protection; water supply protection; and agricultural, open space,  
23 historical preservation, and community development pattern constraints.

24 (h) The statewide planning program shall maintain a geographic information system map  
25 that identifies, to the extent feasible, areas throughout the state suitable for higher density  
26 residential development consistent with the guidelines adopted pursuant to subsection (g).

27 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND HOUSING  
RESOURCES ACT OF 1998--MOBLIE HOMES--TOWN OF COVENTRY

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- 1           This act would include mobile homes in the town of Coventry in the definition of
- 2 affordable housing for the purposes of the Rhode Island resources act.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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