



February 11, 2026

The House Committee on Human Services
The House Committee on General and Housing

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on how we can jointly create safe, stable, affordable homes for Vermonters with intellectual and developmental disabilities. My name is Pollaidh Major, and I am the Director of Policy and Special Projects for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB).

I want to start by recognizing the hard work, dedication, and incredible impact of the advocates who have been coming together to ask for equity in housing access. It is a most reasonable and understandable request. They are asking the system to do better, and, with the Road Home Report, they have helped us map out steps to get there.

The Legislature has long directed VHCB to focus on meeting the needs of vulnerable Vermonters, including during the closure of the Brandon Training School. The Board's role is as a capital funder for the construction of these service-supported homes. In doing this work, we recognize the critical importance of coordination between developers, service providers, and the broader community. This collaboration has always been at the core of our work and is why we were so honored to serve on the working group charged with charting a plan for developing the 600 homes needed for Vermonters with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).

Following the passage of Act 186, VHCB worked with the three planning grant recipients to develop new housing in Randolph, Waterbury, Burlington, and Ferrisburgh. VHCB provided \$16,752,955 funding to all three pilot projects, and two additional projects. This resulted in the construction of 69 homes statewide, of which 30 are designated for IDD households. At its January Board meeting, VHCB committed funds to another project, and we continue to work on a pipeline that includes a proposed expansion of an existing project.

We see the success of the pilot program as threefold: First, the three projects planned are in development. Second, it identified diverse models that can be replicated. Third, it sparked two additional projects and more in the pipeline. We know that more work can and will get done if there is continued state investment in meeting this need.

As housing funders, cost is always at the top of mind for us, so we were also particularly grateful that one of the outcomes of the study group has been a renewed focus on balancing safety with dignity and the least restrictive environment in the licensing process. We have seen in our own

VERMONT HOUSING & CONSERVATION BOARD

58 East State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 | (802) 828-3250 | vhcb.org



BOARD OF DIRECTORS: David R. Marvin, Chair • Neil Mickenberg, Vice Chair • Maura Collins • Clarence Davis
Jen Hollar • Kate McCarthy • Julie Moore • Amy Mynter • Jenney Samuelson • Anson Tebbetts • Emily Wadhams

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Gustave Seelig

pipeline that this has the potential to be a cost driver, and we have heard from families who have concerns about their family members being in environments whose restrictions do not meet their needs.

The work has been a learning process for us all. The Road Home report captures that learning and amplifies how we can do more of this critical work. I want to recognize the leadership of Kirsten Murphy in spearheading this work and welcoming in diverse expertise from the development community, DAIL, the Land Access and Opportunity Board, the service provider community, and most importantly individuals with disabilities and their families. I also want to thank the self-advocates and families for their testimony here today and for seeking to have our housing systems ensure equity, parity and the capacity to meet the needs of Vermonters.

It has been an honor to participate in this process. VHCB remains committed to working with the General Assembly and the stakeholder group in advancing these initiatives.

Thank you for your focus on this today.

Sincerely,

Pollaidh Major
Director of Policy and Special Projects
Vermont Housing and Conservation Board



VERMONT HOUSING & CONSERVATION BOARD

58 East State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 | (802) 828-3250 | vhcb.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: David R. Marvin, Chair • Neil Mickenberg, Vice Chair • Maura Collins • Clarence Davis
Jen Hollar • Kate McCarthy • Julie Moore • Amy Mynter • Jenney Samuelson • Anson Tebbetts • Emily Wadhams

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Gustave Seelig