

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**RIHousing Launches “RI-Refi” Program to
Help Underwater Homeowners
*Up to \$75,000 forgivable loan***

Providence, RI – RIHousing has launched its “RI-Refi” program, which helps homeowners who are “underwater,” or owe more than the current market value of the home. Eligible homeowners can receive up to \$75,000 to reduce the amount owed on any first and second mortgage(s) with a three-year forgiveness period.

“Without a home, it’s much harder to get a job, raise a family and build a strong community,” Governor Gina Raimondo said. “The RI-Refi program is a critical piece of the puzzle in our fight to keep Rhode Islanders in their homes, and to support a strong economy.”

The RI-Refi program will offer homeowners with negative equity up to \$75,000 to reduce the balance owed on their first or second mortgages and refinance into a 30-year RIHousing fixed-rate loan based on the current market value of the home. The maximum loan limit allowed is \$424,100 for a one- to four-family home or eligible condominium.

“Rhode Island was hit particularly hard by the foreclosure crisis, and although our housing market is improving, many homeowners are still underwater,” said Barbara Fields, Executive Director of RIHousing. “RI-Refi enables struggling homeowners to refinance to a more manageable monthly payment that reflects the home’s current value. RIHousing is thrilled to help more Rhode Island families remain in their homes.”

The forgivable loan will lower the amount owed on an underwater loan, allowing homeowners to erase their negative equity and achieve long-term mortgage sustainability; by refinancing to lower loan amount, homeowners will be able to reduce their monthly payments.

RI-Refi is targeted toward homeowners who have been current on their mortgage payments for at least 12 consecutive months. Eligible homeowners must also qualify for the new loan under RIHousing’s income and credit requirements. The property must be a one- to four-family home or eligible condominium, and the property must be the homeowner’s primary residence.

To be eligible for the RI-Refi Program, the homeowner's total annual household income must be less than \$87,360 (for a one- to two-person household) or \$101,920 (for a three+ person household).

RIHousing estimates that about 100 households will be helped through this program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Hardest Hit Fund program.

For more information on the RI-Refi program, including eligibility guidelines and a list of participating lenders, contact RIHousing at (401) 450-1321 or visit RI-Refi.org.

About Rhode Island Housing

RIHousing works to ensure that all people who live and work in Rhode Island can afford a healthy, attractive home that meets their needs. Rhode Island Housing uses its resources to provide low-interest loans, grants, education and assistance to help Rhode Islanders rent, buy, build and keep a good home. Created by the General Assembly in 1973, Rhode Island Housing is a privately funded public purpose corporation.