



Board of Directors

April 25, 2023

Zainab Ilumoka
President

Rhode Island House Committee on Corporations:

Servio Gomez
Vice President

RE: Support for H.B. 5847 from the George Wiley Center

Alex Burnett
Secretary

Today you have the opportunity to make strides toward utility affordability and accessibility this session by sending House Bill 5847 to the House for a vote on the floor.

Maria Gold
Treasurer

House Bill # 5847: This Bill, also known as the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP), would allow for fairer utility rates for low-income Rhode Islanders. As it stands low-income households pay a higher percentage of their incomes to gas and electric costs. This act creates a multi-tiered income-sensitive subsidy program to ensure that home energy utility costs are affordable for eligible low-income households.

Mayra Paulino
Tony Ansah

Dean Sudarsky

This Bill can reduce state expenditures by lowering the frequency of utility shut-offs. Utility shut-offs are known to cause emergency room visits, Department of Children, Youth & Families interventions, and other costly outcomes. Through this legislation, we have a chance to challenge the utility termination crisis for low-income households that has plagued our state for too long. After years of community organizing with thousands of our members and allies from across the state, the George Wiley Center is hopeful, with your support, this legislation will be passed.

Bethany Melo

Ellie Wyatt

Chris Murphy

Jim Vita

Every month that goes by without a PIPP in place, low-income consumers pay disproportionately unaffordable rates. It is urgent to pass H.B. # 5847 now more than ever, in order to make utilities more affordable and more accessible, especially since the cost of utilities has increased. Over the last year, we have seen increased housing costs in Rhode Island; passing H.B. # 5847 will help with housing security.

Ubaldo Quintero

Maryellen Kurkulos

Arlen Austin

With the escalating instability of global energy markets, it is imperative to establish a percentage income program in Rhode Island, as already exists in over a dozen other states. Having H.B. # 5847 in place will allow for more utility consumers to successfully complete current arrearage forgiveness plans. H.B. # 5847 will decrease the frequency of people who default in these forgiveness programs.

Ben Evans

Virginia Gonsalves

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We are thankful to elected officials and other stakeholders who have listened to your constituents and our members and joined together to lend your support to this essential program. We look forward to working together to assure its successful passage, implementation, enrollment and monitoring of HB 5847. We are hopeful that you will move forward with your committee sending House Bill # 5847 for a full vote in the House.

Sincerely,
Camilo Viveiros
Executive Director,
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