

March 4th, 2025

Louis Mansolillo
Committee Clerk
Rhode Island House Committee on Corporations
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Mr. Mansolillo,

It is a pleasure to write in **support of House Bill No. 5549**, introduced by Kennedy, Azzinaro, Edwards, Solomon, O'Brien, Kazarian, Diaz. This is entitled "AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- RHODE ISLAND PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE GUARANTY ASSOCIATION". As the Ocean State and the entire nation are facing greater storms and natural disasters, this program is an important step to help educate and prepare Rhode Island consumers. Ceres is a national profit organization focusing on sustainability of business. We have been working in the insurance area for almost 15 years and have deep experience with this and other business practices.

As you and all Rhode Island colleagues are well aware, according to the National Centers for Environmental Information - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, from 1980–2024, there were 33 confirmed weather/climate disaster events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each affecting Rhode Island. [These events](#) included 1 drought event, 2 flooding events, 1 freeze event, 7 severe storm events, 8 tropical cyclone events, and 14 winter storm events.

Hurricanes and tropical storms are no strangers to Rhode Island. [Thirty-one](#) such storms have affected the state in the past 56 years, either making landfall along the coast of southern New England or passing close enough over the offshore waters to spread tropical storm or hurricane force conditions into the area.

As noted, while this is a Rhode Island issue, it is also a national issue. In February 2025, [Federal Reserve](#) Chairman Jerome Powell [warned](#) that getting mortgages in some high-risk areas could be impossible due to the lack of insurance. In 2024, the United States endured [27 separate billion-dollar](#) weather and climate-related disasters—the highest number on record. And that undercounts events like the North Carolina hurricane and the L.A. fires.

The average American home insurance real premiums have [risen by 20%](#) between 2020 and 2023, according to Harvard. By 2055, [84%](#) of all U.S. homes may see some drop in value, totaling \$1.47 trillion in losses, according to an analysis by climate-risk firm [First Street](#). In the next five years, [at least 20%](#) of U.S. homes will be devalued by the effects of climate change, said Dave Burt, founder of DeltaTerra Capital, an investment research and consulting firm.

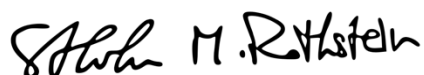
House Bill No. 5549 is a proven concept that works. Starting with Alabama and their [Safe Homes Alabama program](#), a version of this concept has been successfully replicated in numerous states across the nation; educating consumers on their risk and hopefully, over time, providing incentives for consumers to build resiliency into their homes

As part of our broader work with the insurance industry, Ceres published a [10 point plan for the insurance industry](#) with a comprehensive set of ideas. This legislation clearly fits with several of the recommendations including:

4. Incentivize Climate Mitigation Efforts and Emerging Climate Opportunities
8. Update Climate-Resilient Building Codes

Thank you for your time and for your consideration. We hope the Committee and the legislature favorably acts on **House Bill No. 5549**. If there are questions or if you would like further information, I can be reached at srothstein@ceres.org

Best wishes.



Steven M. Rothstein
Managing Director
Ceres Accelerator for Sustainable Capital Markets