

Chairperson and Members of the R.I. House Corporation Committee
82 Smith St.
Providence, R.I. 02903

Date: April 7, 2026

Subject: Written Testimony in Strong Support for the PIPP Bill (House #7880)

Dear Chairperson and Members of the House Corporation Committee,

As both a R.I. voter, and as President of the Southern District for the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Rhode Island, I am writing to ask the R.I. House Corporation Committee to support legislation establishing a Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) in Rhode Island. This legislation (House Bill#7880) is more than just policy—it is a lifeline for Rhode Islanders who are struggling to make ends meet, and an investment in the stability and dignity of our community. Too many families in our state face the impossible choice between paying for essential services and meeting basic needs. The PIPP Bill provides structured support to prevent these crises, giving people the ability to live without constant fear of falling behind. It ensures that Rhode Islanders can focus on their families, their jobs, and their futures, rather than worrying about bills or penalties. I know firsthand—or have seen in my community—the stress and hardship that can come from high energy bills. The SVdP conferences in Rhode Island helped 1,165 households across the State with a total of \$326,795 in utility payments in 2025. My SVdP conference in Westerly assisted our neighbors with over \$14,000 in utility payments in 2025. These numbers don't reflect the whole picture. In the same time period, my Westerly conference assisted another 88 households with housing assistance payments totaling over \$37,000 because housing stability in our community is threatened by high utility costs. By passing this bill, you have the power to make life measurably better for thousands of people across our state. It is a chance to show that Rhode Island values fairness, compassion, and opportunity for all and certainly above the exorbitant profits of R.I. Energy.

Please stand with the people you serve and support the PIPP Bill. Its passage would not only protect vulnerable families but would strengthen the entire fabric of our community. Our neighbors deserve this protection. Our state deserves this progress.

Thank you for your attention and your service to our communities and to the State as a whole. I hope you will make the right choice for our residents and our shared future.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joan E. Gradilone
SVdPRI Board Member
President of the Southern District of SVdPRI