

Chairman Marvin Abney DATE  
House Finance Committee  
RI State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

May 20, 2025

Re: Testimony in support of H5323

Dear Chairman Abney and members of the committee,

I write in strong support Representative Casey's Joint Resolution to Support Sojourner House.

I have volunteered with Sojourner House for over 10 years and have been on the Board for the past 5 years, in addition to chairing the Development Committee. I continue to be impressed with everything that Sojourner House does. Sojourner House has grown tremendously over the time I have been involved with them – from the services offered, to the number of clients served (which really means the number of people within the state that Sojourner House has saved and helped), to the growth in programs, budget, and staffing. Sojourner House is an incredibly well run organization with a focus on offering critical services within Rhode Island.

For over 49 years, Sojourner House, a Providence-based non-profit now serving all of Rhode Island, has supported thousands of victims and survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, and human trafficking. They offer services like support groups, shelter, permanent housing, sexual health advocacy, and emotional support. In 2024, they assisted nearly 2,000 victims from 33 RI cities and towns.

Five years ago, recognizing the need for affordable housing, Sojourner House began developing housing and now owns or leases over 175 units statewide, providing permanent supportive housing to victims. This is the most effective way to help families transition to safety. Sojourner House is the only organization in Rhode Island creating affordable housing for victims. They receive over 80% of their funding from federal sources, most of which require matching funds. It's time for Rhode Island to provide matching funds to ensure Sojourner House can continue its vital work.

This is a smart return on investment and is helping Rhode Island meet its low-income housing goals. Please support this \$500,000 allocation for Sojourner House.

Thank you for your consideration!

Xenia Murphy  
8 Landover Dr, East Greenwich, RI