

April 29, 2026

Re: Support for H7803 – State-Funded Rental Subsidy Program

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

We, the undersigned organizations and advocates, write in strong support of **H7803**, legislation to establish a **State-Funded Rental Subsidy Program** to help Rhode Islanders experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness access safe, stable, and affordable homes.

Rhode Island has made important progress in expanding housing supply through bonds, zoning reform, and production incentives. Those efforts are essential. Yet for many households with the lowest incomes—including seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, and individuals exiting homelessness—new housing alone does not solve the affordability gap. Many Rhode Islanders simply do not earn enough to afford available rents, even in subsidized developments.

Today, Rhode Island faces a shortage of more than **23,000 rental homes affordable and available to extremely low-income households**, and more than **70% of extremely low-income renters are cost-burdened**. The result is visible in every community: longer shelter stays, increased housing instability, and more people forced into unsafe or unsheltered situations.

H7803 creates a practical and proven tool to address this challenge by establishing a state rental subsidy that can be paired with housing production and resources to create deeply affordable homes. By ensuring eligible households pay no more than 30% of income toward rent, the program would help bridge the gap between extremely low household incomes and the actual cost of operating quality housing.

This legislation is important because it would:

- **Create housing pathways out of homelessness** for Rhode Islanders with the greatest needs.
- **Leverage and complement federal resources** that are limited and increasingly uncertain.
- **Support long-term housing stability** through project-based subsidies tied to specific apartments.
- **Protect public resources** by reducing costly reliance on emergency shelters, hospitals, crisis systems, and corrections.
- **Strengthen Rhode Island’s housing delivery system** by making more developments financially feasible for vulnerable populations.

Housing stability improves health, employment, educational outcomes, and community well-being. Investing in permanent housing solutions is both compassionate and fiscally responsible.

Rhode Island has shown leadership in tackling the housing shortage. Passing H7803 is the next strategic step to ensure that our most vulnerable neighbors are not left behind.

We respectfully urge you to support **H7803** and advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Amos House
Community Housing Land Trust of Rhode Island
Economic Progress Institute
Housing Network of Rhode Island
RAMP real access motivates progress
Women's Development Corporation
NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Sojourner House
RI Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness
Housing Works RI
Crossroads Rhode Island
Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL)
Foster Forward
Rhode Island Community Action Association

Charlie Thomas-Davison, Warwick
Ben Darby, Providence
Brady Dunklee, Providence
Jessica Kiebler, Smithfield
Monica Teixeira de Sousa, Cranston
Tanya Tanksley, Pawtucket
Monica Maye, Cranston
Bernie Beaudreau, East Providence
Taylor Ellis, South Kingstown; RI Homeless Advocacy Project
Lev Poplow, DARE
Michelle Wilcox, Coventry
Maria E. Rico
Terri Wright, Providence; RI Homeless Advocacy Project, RI Poor People's Campaign
Derek Bowman, Providence
Rae McCaskill, Providence
Katie West, Warwick
Melina Lodge, Warwick