

*Together for Children. Families. Communities.*

April 29, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair  
House Finance Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903

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

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families (RICCF), we 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.

For children and families, housing is foundational. Families cannot thrive when they are struggling to keep a roof over their heads. Housing instability creates ripple effects across every aspect of a child's life—disrupting school attendance, worsening physical and behavioral health challenges, increasing family stress, and heightening the risk of involvement with child welfare and other crisis systems.

Our member organizations work every day with children and families experiencing these challenges. We see firsthand how difficult it is for families with the lowest incomes to secure and maintain stable housing, even when they are connected to services and doing everything they can to stay afloat.

Rhode Island has made progress in expanding housing supply through bonds, zoning reform, and production incentives. These efforts are critical and commendable. But for many families with children, seniors raising grandchildren, young adults aging out of care, and households living on fixed or extremely limited incomes, 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. For families, this often means doubling up, moving frequently, entering shelter, or facing eviction and homelessness.

H7803 creates a practical and proven tool to help address this crisis by establishing a state-funded rental subsidy that can be paired with housing production and other 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 incomes and the actual cost of stable housing.


This legislation is especially important for children and families because it would:

- Help prevent homelessness and reduce family shelter stays.
- Improve stability for children, supporting better educational, health, and behavioral outcomes.
- Reduce family stress and prevent crises that can lead to child welfare or behavioral health system involvement.
- Support young adults transitioning from foster care or behavioral health systems into stable housing.
- Reduce reliance on more costly emergency services, shelters, hospitals, and crisis systems.

Housing stability is one of the strongest predictors of family well-being. When families have safe, affordable housing, children are healthier, more likely to succeed in school, and less likely to experience trauma and instability.

Rhode Island has shown leadership in addressing the housing crisis. Passing H7803 is an important next step to ensure that our most vulnerable children and families are not left behind.

Sincerely,



Tanja Kubas-Meyer  
Executive Director  
Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families