

[Sent](#) Dear Chair Abney and honorable members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Beth Dodier. I am writing in strong support of HR 7059, which would appropriate \$100,000 to the Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging for the Rhode Island Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

This program exists to protect some of our most vulnerable residents: elderly and disabled individuals living in long term care facilities who often cannot advocate for themselves. The Ombudsman Program gives them a voice. It investigates complaints, resolves disputes, and ensures that the dignity and rights of residents are upheld at a time when they are most at risk of being overlooked. This is something I understand deeply, having lived it firsthand over more than a decade of personal experience.

The fact that the state appropriation for this program has not increased in fifteen years is, frankly, hard to reconcile with Rhode Island's values. Costs have risen. The population of older adults has grown. The need is greater than ever. Yet the funding has stood still.

A \$100,000 investment is modest in the context of a state budget. The impact it enables is anything but. I urge the committee to support this bill and send a clear signal that Rhode Island stands behind the people who can no longer stand up for themselves.

Thank you for your time and your service to our state.

Respectfully,  
Beth Dodier

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