



Mayor of Providence

Brett P. Smiley

May 19, 2026

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

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I support House Resolution 8534, which would authorize an appropriation of \$850,000 for New Bridges for Haitian Success for residential property acquisition for transitional housing to support immigrants with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and asylum status.

New Bridges for Haitian Success is a trusted Providence-based nonprofit that has long supported Haitian immigrants and families in Providence and across Rhode Island. New Bridges for Haitian Success offers culturally competent programs, community support, and direct supports to recently arrived refugees and immigrants. For many newly arrived residents navigating complex legal, economic, and housing challenges, New Bridges serves as a first point of connection, support, and stability.

At the same time, Rhode Island and Providence continue to face housing affordability challenges made worse by the housing shortage. In the City of Providence, we are taking a comprehensive approach focused on production, preservation, and protection. Since taking office, my Administration has streamlined the development process, aligned housing with health and human services, and financed long-term affordable housing projects. These efforts are paired with tenant protections, including Right to Counsel and the recently announced Rental and Essential Needs Transition (RENT) Fund to help residents stay safely housing. Providence is on track to exceed the state's housing production target due to these sustained investments in housing supply while also protecting residents from displacement.

This proposed support for New Bridges for Haitian Success complements this strategy by addressing an urgent housing need. Transitional housing in an evidence-based strategy and is needed to address the needs of newcomers as they are rebuilding their lives in a new home while navigating immigration proceedings, employment, and long-term housing. We know that housing is critical to ensuring that families successfully transition into long-term stability.

Recent federal policy changes and restructuring of federal funding have placed a strain on community organizations. State support ensures that trusted local organizations, like New Bridges for Haitian Success, can continue to provide critical services.

I respectfully urge the committee to vote in favor of this legislation.

Sincerely,


Brett P. Smiley
Mayor