

25 March 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Rhode Island House Committee on House Judiciary,

My name is Calvin Kirk and I am writing to express my **strong support for H 7049**, which adds the “Rent Stabilization Act” to the “Residential Landlord and Tenant Act,” which limits rent increases to no more than 4% annually and provides tenants with a civil action to recover damages for any violations.

Multiple recent national and local news reports have highlighted that Providence has had the fastest inflating rent prices in the country. This is an issue that needs to be immediately addressed: the inflating prices of rents affects everyone and needs to come to a halt.

Of course, part of the problem is that, currently in Rhode Island, there is nothing that prevents landlords from arbitrarily raising prices of rent from month to month. And it is no surprise that landlords abuse this to raise rents as they wish (and some even use this as a tactic to threaten and evict tenants).

Rent stabilization is a crucial step towards fixing this urgent problem in Rhode Island. There needs to be measures put in place so that rents do not rise at insanely high rates, and H 7049 does exactly that. We need to strive to make Rhode Island a place where housing security is available to everyone. The housing crisis in Rhode Island is one of the most urgent issues we face today; I strongly urge you to stand with the people of Rhode Island and support this bill.

Thank you for considering my testimony and for your commitment to ensuring fair and equitable housing in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,
Calvin Kirk