

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 7965**, the inclusion of the right of first refusal in the Tenant Bill of Rights in Rhode Island, which grants tenants the opportunity to purchase the property they call home if their landlord decides to sell it.

The right of first refusal grants tenants a sixty day period to employ their option to purchase the property under identical terms offered to any other potential purchaser. This ensures transparency and fairness in the sale process, preventing any discriminatory practices or unfair advantages for outside buyers. This would allow tenants to maintain stability and continuity in their housing situation. Tenants can secure their long-term housing needs and invest in their community by having the option to purchase the property that they lived in.

It is important to note that this right extends beyond the tenant themselves. Tenants also have the ability to assign this right to a family member or friend, or even to a non-profit or public agency. This ensures that the benefits of homeownership and community stability can be shared and extended to those who may not have had the opportunity otherwise.

The right of first refusal is a vital component of the Tenant Bill of Rights in Rhode Island. It empowers tenants, promotes fairness in property transactions, and strengthens communities by allowing residents to have a stake in the places they live. I urge lawmakers to support and uphold this important protection for tenants across our state.

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

Sincerely,  
Calvin Kirk