

Ariana Costa

From: Merrill Schmidt <merrill994@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 9:58 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Support for H-5503 - Just Cause

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Good morning,

My name is Merrill Schmidt, and I live in Cranston, RI and work with high school students at a nonprofit organization in Providence. I'm writing in support of H-5503 (Just Cause), which would protect renters in good standing from evictions and extreme rent increases. This bill would help reduce evictions, homelessness, and housing insecurity in our communities. I believe that this bill would help address the housing crisis, which is one of the biggest issues in our state.

As a renter, this bill is personal to me. While I'm fortunate to have never faced an eviction, the threat of an eviction for no cause is very anxiety-producing for my family. I am concerned about the possibility of a huge rent increase at the time of my lease renewal or an eviction for standing up for my rights as a tenant. I have met several people in Rhode Island who have experienced this worse-case scenario, and the experience is truly devastating. Evictions can lead to homelessness because it is very hard to find a new apartment after being evicted.

In addition to my personal concerns, I am concerned about the impact of evictions and excessive rent hikes on the high school students and families I work with in Providence. I have seen how the lack of affordable housing, the threat of no-cause eviction, and the affordability crisis have created an extremely insecure situation for Providence families. Facing housing insecurity impacts students' academic achievement, social development, and future career prospects. I believe that passing H-5503 is one important step towards protecting working and middle class families in our state, reducing the risk of homelessness, and helping address the housing crisis.

Thanks for your consideration,
Merrill Schmidt