



Hon. Robert E. Craven
Chair of the House Committee on Judiciary
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

**RE: Support for House Bill #5503
(RELATED TO PROPERTY– RESIDENTIAL LANDLORDS AND TENANT ACT --
JUST CAUSE EVICTIONS)**

Dear Chairman Craven and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I write to you as Co-Chair of the Rhode Island Black, Latino, Indigenous, Asian American, and Pacific Islander (RIBLIA) Caucus in strong support of House Bill #5503. Today, our Caucus stands at the largest it's ever been with 21 members representing communities all over our state.

This year, the caucus is prioritizing 15 bills that reflect our unwavering commitment to defending the marginalized and ensuring a fair and equitable future for all Rhode Islanders. **Aligning with our commitment to improving the living and economic conditions of our constituents, the RIBLIA Caucus supports House Bill #5503 by Rep. Cruz which would require just-cause reasoning for evictions.**

Given a lack of federal protections, landlords can currently evict tenants with little to no notice. It falls largely to local and state governments to enact just-cause eviction laws to protect the rights of tenants. In Rhode Island, predominantly Black and Latino communities experience higher eviction rates, with households led by women of color being the most vulnerable to eviction filings. The bill would require landlords to provide just cause for evictions and while capping annual rent increases at 4%. These protections would help prevent tenants from being priced out—especially critical amid ongoing gentrification and rising homelessness. Access to safe, stable housing should not depend on race, gender, or socioeconomic status. Unfair evictions can be life-altering, and Rhode Island law must prevent landlords from abusing their power and displacing vulnerable residents

House Bill #5503 is a decisive step toward ending exploitative practices. By implementing just-cause eviction laws, this bill safeguards tenants from harmful eviction practices, such as a retaliatory eviction filing after a tenant shares their concerns with the building conditions of their unit. Members of the RIBLIA Caucus urge passage of this bill. Thank you for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,

Representative David Morales
Co-Chair RIBLIA Caucus