

Roberta DiMezza

From: Janice Hannert <user@votervoice.net>
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2025 8:48 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Support H5504 - Emotional Support Animals

Dear Committee Clerk DiMezza,

I support H5504, please pass it.

This bill would require valid documentation for emotional support animals. Right now it is possible to download forms from the internet. This law would establish a clear legal process for acceptance of emotional support animals.

Please pass H5504.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Please support H5504, which ensures that only individuals with verified disabilities qualify for emotional support animals (ESAs). Landlords are permitted to request valid documentation from licensed Rhode Island healthcare professionals to confirm the tenant's need for an ESA, but they cannot refuse housing solely due to the presence of an ESA. The goal of this legislation is to strike a balance between the rights of tenants who require emotional support animals and the concerns of housing providers.

This bill establishes a clear legal process for the acceptance of ESAs. It aligns state service animal laws with federal regulations, designates dogs and cats as recognized emotional support animals, and outlines the types of documentation landlords can request. Additionally, it requires applicants to have an established relationship with a Rhode Island medical professional for at least 30 days before providing documentation verifying their need for an ESA. This language is already part of law in several other states.

Sincerely,

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