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**RHODE ISLAND COALITION  
OF HOUSING PROVIDERS**

[www.ricohp.org](http://www.ricohp.org)

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April 21, 2025

To Honorable Representative Robert E. Craven, Sr.  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903  
VIA Email: [HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)

RE: Letter in OPPOSITION to House Bill No. 6160

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Rhode Island Coalition of Housing Providers ("the coalition") in opposition to House Bill 6160.

First, we want to acknowledge the intent of this bill and commend the sponsors for their efforts to support and protect victims of domestic violence. We fully support initiatives that aim to provide survivors with safety, stability, and the resources needed to rebuild their lives. However, we must respectfully oppose the bill in its current form due to serious concerns about potential unintended consequences.

While the spirit of the proposal is commendable, the current language lacks essential safeguards to ensure that legally binding agreements can be rightfully and consistently enforced. Contracts are the foundation of the landlord-tenant relationship, and any change to the conditions under which they may be invalidated must be approached with great care and balance.

Our primary concern is the bill's allowance for personal, unverified statements to serve as sufficient grounds for nullifying a lease agreement. Without requirements for objective evidence, due process, or consideration of both parties' rights, this approach invites potential misuse and places the courts in a difficult position—forced to assess the validity of claims without the tools necessary to do so fairly. This could undermine confidence in contract law and create inconsistencies in its application.

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Additionally, the bill does not account for the complexity of certain real-world scenarios. One such concern is the possibility of the alleged abuser remaining in possession of the property, especially in cases where they are not the leaseholder. Requiring landlords to change locks or take other irreversible actions based solely on unsubstantiated accusations may inadvertently conflict with existing landlord-tenant law, and in some cases, could lead to unlawful evictions. This not only exposes landlords to legal liability but also risks harm to wrongly accused individuals. This could also lead to the alleged criminal party confronting the landlord and placing them in danger as well.

We urge the committee to consider amending the bill to include clear evidentiary standards and procedural safeguards. These should be designed to protect both the rights of survivors and the integrity of contractual relationships. Fairness and due process must remain central as we work to support individuals in vulnerable and often dangerous situations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your continued commitment to crafting thoughtful, balanced legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shannon', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Shannon Elizabeth Weinstein  
On Behalf of The RI Coalition of Housing Providers