

Roberta DiMezza

From: Sarah Leibel <sahrleibel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2026 8:53 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Support for S2047/H7198

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Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Sarah Leibel. I am a proud Providence resident, parent of two school-aged children, a leadership coach and a mindfulness-based emotional intelligence educator. I am writing to express my support for House Bill 7198, which would change the maximum prison sentence for a misdemeanor offense from one year to 364 days.

Passing this legislation would help protect vulnerable members of our immigrant community, including asylum seekers and victims of domestic violence, who otherwise could be barred from immigration relief due to a misdemeanor conviction and could face deportation. States like New York, Washington, and Nevada have amended their criminal codes in recent years in this way to protect their residents against harsh immigration consequences. As you know, the bill would not include federally regulated crimes such as domestic violence and other violent crimes, so Rhode Islanders need not fear being left unprotected from violent offenders.

As a Jewish woman and the granddaughter of Jewish immigrants fleeing oppression, I know how much they benefited from being welcomed into this country, as well as the horrific danger of being targeted for being "other" or "foreign."

We are living in extraordinary times of state-sponsored racialized violence, xenophobia, and cruelty. Each of us needs to do everything we can in our areas of influence to fight back against this brutal regime and protect the most vulnerable among us. I hope you will take this opportunity to step up and approve this legislation and protect Rhode Island immigrant communities from the harsh consequences of federal law for instances of minor misconduct.

Thank you for reviewing my testimony and my recommendation to support House Bill 7198.

Sincerely,

Sarah Leibel

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SARAH LEIBEL

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