

Chairperson Carol Hagan McEntee
House Judiciary Committee
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

March 4, 2026

Dear Chairperson McEntee and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Thank you Chairperson McEntee and all sponsors of the Rhode Island Civil Rights Enforcement Act, H7352. I hope that your Committee will move this key legislation forward for a floor vote as soon as possible.

This bill gives us an opportunity restore the rights of all Rhode Islanders to sue for violations of our Rhode Island state constitutional rights. When our Supreme Court ruled that rights enumerated in our state constitution are not “self-executing,” they negated your work in enacting laws to protect Rhode Islanders.

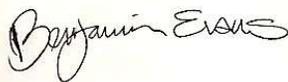
If we fail to pass the Rhode Island Civil Rights Enforcement Act, H7352, then our state constitution is merely words on paper. Our Supreme Court has left it to you, the legislature, to decide whether our constitutional rights can be vindicated in the courts. This bill does that.

H7352 is especially crucial today, as masked federal paramilitaries kill Americans like Renee Nicole Good and Alex Jeffrey Pretti with impunity. This bill would allow Rhode Islanders to sue federal agents for violating their state constitutional rights. Since remedies in federal court for violations of federal constitutional rights by federal agents are very difficult, this R.I. state law is extraordinarily important.

Moreover, this bill applies to all government agents, which means that it won't be struck down by the federal courts because it only applies to ICE agents as happened in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles to the California state bill banning ICE agents from wearing masks. This is the problem with H7202, which allows suits against federal agents only, and is therefore susceptible to being struck down in federal court.

Please pass this bill to protect Rhode Islanders by making the freedoms enumerated in our Rhode Island Constitution mean what they say.

Yours,



Benjamin Evans
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