



State of Rhode Island
Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos

May 21, 2026

The Hon. Matthew LaMountain
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

The Hon. Carol Hagan McEntee
Chair, House Judiciary Committee

Re: Letter of Support for S2045 and H7360: An Act Relating To Criminal Procedure -- Protect Our Courts Act

To Chairs LaMountain and McEntee:

I write to you in support of S2045 and H7360: An Act Relating To Criminal Procedure -- Protect Our Courts Act. This bill protects people attending Rhode Island court proceedings from civil arrest without a judicial warrant, ensures court access, sets enforcement rules, and provides remedies for violations.

Rhode Islanders deserve to be able to participate in legal proceedings without fear, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, over the past year we have witnessed several violations of this basic standard. Last November, ICE detained a teenage judicial intern outside the Licht Judicial Complex in Providence. And in January of this year, ICE “barreled” through the Garrahy Judicial Complex in pursuit of two young men. They did not check with security or check their weapons, according to the Providence Journal.

Harassing and intimidating individuals going through the legal system undermines the integrity and trust of our judiciary. For the sake of our system, and those intertwined within it, our state’s courthouses must be accessible, safe, and free from the dangerous climate that ICE and other federal immigration authorities seek to instill.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote this bill favorably out of committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabina Matos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sabina Matos

Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor

CC: Members of the RIBLIA Caucus