

Ariana Costa

From: bounce@bounce.votervoice.net on behalf of Christopher Smith <user@votervoice.net>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2026 10:01 PM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: SUPPORT H7559 Rental Registry Changes

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Committee Clerk DiMezza,

I urge you to support H7559 which makes necessary changes to the rental registry law that was recently enacted:

- Focuses the registry on pre-1978 properties

This will allow the registry to be used to concentrate our state's limited resources only on properties that potentially pose a lead paint hazard, rather than properties that cannot possibly pose a lead paint hazard because the use of lead-based paint in residences was outlawed in 1978.

- Clarify information required for the registry and limit information that would be public facing

Through trial and error at the registry's initial roll-out, it was apparent that unnecessary information was publicized and may still be. While it is important to ensure lead safety, it is also important to protect the identity and privacy of all Rhode Islanders. In today's era of internet scams, fraud, and lack of security, it is important to restore certain protections. It would be reasonable that a tenant access information pertaining to their own residence, but we cannot see the benefit of the general public accessing information that is not pertinent to their own living arrangements.

- Eliminates eviction ban for non-conforming units

As it stands now, a landlord cannot evict a tenant for non-payment if they do not have their lead certificate. This measure is punitive and counterproductive to the goal by preventing the lawful eviction of tenants who may not even be at-risk of lead poisoning and incentivizes tenants who may be at-risk to remain in potentially unsafe conditions. Many landlords require rental income in order to pay their operating expenses such as mortgage, taxes, insurance, utilities, and maintenance costs. Additionally, the cost to make necessary changes for lead safety and/or inspect a property could be harmed by a reduction in cash flow due to a non-paying tenant. We must incentivize reaching the goal of lead safe housing rather than subject landlords and tenants to a failing system of unintended consequence.

Thank you for taking the time to hear some of the current issues and proposed remedies needed for the rental registry.

Sincerely,

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