

Roberta DiMezza

From: bounce@bounce.votervoice.net on behalf of Laura Gill <user@votervoice.net>
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2026 8:26 PM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: OPPOSE - Please vote NO H8108 & S2271

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Dear Committee Clerk DiMezza,

This is not the way forward. Capping rent while there are no controls on insurance, property taxes, repairs or renovations punishes housing providers unfairly. Being a landlord is a business not a charity and most of us are modest homeowners who do our best to provide nice places to live at a fair price. If this goes through (especially with vacancy control and limiting the ability to evict problem tenants) I personally would find it way too risky and potentially expensive to continue to offer my properties for rent. It just wouldn't be worth the headache. Also funding for attorneys and treble damages needs to go both ways. There are far more bad tenants out there who trash apartments or pay late or not at all than bad landlords. This proposed legislation is completely one sided and interferes with basic market conditions and property rights. Vote NO.

I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to H8108 & S2271

This legislation should be viewed as a statewide economic policy rather than a landlord-tenant dispute. Regulating housing prices changes incentives across the entire market — affecting investment decisions, property maintenance, financing, and ultimately the availability of housing for Rhode Island residents.

Evidence from other jurisdictions consistently shows that rent control reduces housing supply and reinvestment. A national survey by the National Apartment Association found that ****71% of housing providers expect to reduce or halt investment in regulated markets****, while more than ****60% report deferring non-essential maintenance and improvements****. The National Association of Home Builders similarly reports that ****nearly 90% of builders avoid constructing housing in rent-controlled jurisdictions****.

This is particularly concerning in Rhode Island, where ****over 80% of the housing stock is older**** and depends on continual reinvestment to remain safe and habitable. Limiting rental income makes it more difficult to finance repairs, modernization, and energy improvements, which ultimately harms the quality of housing available to tenants.

Historical outcomes reinforce this pattern. In the 1980s, after rent control was imposed, the number of rental units declined by ****8% in Cambridge and 12% in Brookline, Massachusetts****. After Cambridge repealed rent control in 1994, permits for new construction and renovation more than doubled for the following decade — demonstrating how regulation had suppressed housing activity.

Rent regulation also affects public finances. Reduced property values translate into reduced tax revenue for essential services. Because municipalities rely heavily on property taxation, that burden does not disappear — it shifts, often onto single-family homeowners. In Portland, Maine, analysts estimated ****\$6.3 to \$10.6 million annually**** in redistributed tax burden onto other property owners following similar policies. Many of Rhode Island's cities have a larger share of multifamily property in comparison to Portland, ME - meaning that shift would be even larger.

Finally, rent control often fails to reach those most in need. After repeal in Cambridge, a study of over 12,000 units showed only **10% of rent-controlled units were occupied by low-income households**, illustrating how broad price controls can misallocate benefits while making housing harder to find for future renters.

Rhode Island faces a real affordability challenge, but long-term solutions require expanding housing availability and supporting targeted assistance for households in need — not discouraging housing creation and reinvestment.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to oppose this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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