

Ariana Costa

From: bounce@bounce.votervoice.net on behalf of Nathan Falso <user@votervoice.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2026 7:28 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: OPPOSE RENT CONTROL H8108 & S2271

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Committee Clerk DiMezza,

I am writing as a lifelong Rhode Island resident, small property owner, and engaged constituent who cares deeply about the long-term health of Providence and our state as a whole.

I am 31 years old, born and raised in Rhode Island. I attended Johnson & Wales University in Providence and later earned my MBA from Providence College. I do not come from money or generational wealth. In 2018, while earning roughly \$50,000 per year, I purchased my first small multi-family property at age 23 so my girlfriend—now my wife—and I could live in one unit and rent the others to help cover expenses. Like many young Rhode Islanders, this was our path to stability, not speculation.

Through years of hard work, responsible financial decisions, and reinvestment, my family has acquired additional properties across the state. We are strong taxpayers at the city, state, and federal level, and we strive to be responsible housing providers. Today, we are raising our four-month-old daughter, Viviana Grace, here in Rhode Island—because we believe in this community and want to build our future here.

From this perspective, proposals such as rent control, just-cause eviction, and similar landlord-tenant policies are deeply concerning.

While the intention behind these ideas may be to protect tenants, the reality on the ground is far more complex. Since 2020, the cost of owning and maintaining housing has increased dramatically. Property taxes, insurance premiums, utilities, labor, and materials have all risen sharply—many by double-digit percentages. Routine repairs that once cost a few thousand dollars can now cost multiples of that. Even in the best-case scenario, turning over an apartment can take months and cost thousands of dollars in lost rent and repairs.

In less ideal situations, I—and many other small landlords—have experienced units left with extensive damage, unpaid rent, and abandoned belongings. These losses are real, unrecoverable, and already absorbed entirely by property owners.

Policies that further restrict rent adjustments or make it more difficult to remove tenants who do not pay or do not respect the property directly undermine the financial viability of providing housing. When owners cannot reasonably cover rising costs or manage risk, the incentive to reinvest disappears.

At scale, this has broader consequences:

Fewer renovations and deferred maintenance, leading to housing deterioration

Reduced willingness to build or invest in Providence and Rhode Island

Increased reliance on large institutional owners rather than local, community-based landlords

A constrained housing supply, which ultimately worsens affordability over time

Cities and states across the country that have implemented strict rent control have seen reductions in housing supply, slower development, and declining property quality. These outcomes hurt tenants, landlords, and the broader economy alike.

Rhode Island already faces significant challenges in attracting capital, retaining young professionals, and encouraging housing development. Policies that signal increased risk and reduced return will only push investment—and opportunity—elsewhere. What happens in Providence does not stay in Providence; it sets the tone for the entire state.

I believe strongly that we can pursue tenant stability without discouraging housing investment. Solutions should focus on increasing supply, streamlining permitting, encouraging new construction, and supporting responsible landlords who are trying to do the right thing—not placing additional burdens on those already providing the housing our state depends on.

I respectfully ask that you consider the unintended consequences of these proposals and engage directly with small, local property owners before advancing policies that could fundamentally alter Rhode Island's housing ecosystem.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your willingness to listen.

Respectfully, Nate Falso

I am writing to express opposition to Senate Bill S2271 and House Bill 8108.

This legislation should be understood as a policy detrimental to the state economy, not a landlord-tenant disagreement. Policies that regulate housing prices alter incentives across the entire housing market — influencing investment, maintenance, lending, insurance underwriting, and ultimately whether additional housing is created in Rhode Island. Analysis from the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC) consistently emphasizes two realities about our state's housing and municipal finance structure: Rhode Island faces a structural housing shortage, and municipalities rely heavily on stable property values to fund core public services. Policies that discourage reinvestment or reduce property values directly undermine both of these conditions at the same time.

By limiting the financial viability of rental housing, this proposal risks reducing reinvestment in existing units and slowing new development. RIPEC's research has highlighted that increasing supply is essential to improving affordability. Measures that restrict returns on housing do the opposite — they discourage production and delay rehabilitation, worsening long-term affordability rather than improving it.

The bill would also require an extensive regulatory framework to administer compliance, hearings, and enforcement. This type of permanent oversight structure carries substantial cost while producing no new housing units. Rhode Island's limited public resources would be more effectively directed toward targeted assistance programs and policies that expand supply — approaches that research repeatedly shows are more effective at helping households facing affordability challenges.

Additionally, if regulated property values stagnate while municipal obligations remain constant, tax burdens inevitably shift. Because municipalities must still fund schools, infrastructure, and safety services, pressure moves toward the most stable tax base: single-family homeowners.

Rhode Island's housing challenge is real, but long-term affordability depends on increasing availability and encouraging reinvestment — not discouraging it. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to oppose S2271/H8108 and instead focus on policies that expand housing opportunity and directly assist residents in need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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