



March 18, 2026

Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H8109 - OPPOSE

Dear Chair McEntee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Business Leaders Alliance (the “Alliance”), I write to oppose H8109, which would significantly restrict a property owner’s ability to remove a tenant from a residential unit.

At the outset, we acknowledge and support the underlying goal of housing stability and tenant protection. Rhode Island is in the midst of a well-documented housing shortage, and policies that promote stability and predictability for residents are important. However, H8109, as drafted, goes well beyond targeted tenant protections and instead creates a framework that would materially disrupt the housing market and disincentivize investment in residential properties.

Rhode Island is already struggling to produce sufficient housing units. Policies that materially increase regulatory risk or limit operational flexibility for property owners will further suppress development and rehabilitation activity. Investors, particularly those financing multifamily housing, require predictable exit and enforcement mechanisms. Removing those tools will inevitably reduce capital flowing into the state’s housing stock.

A substantial portion of Rhode Island’s housing stock is owned by small, local landlords. These individuals often rely on rental income for financial stability and are least equipped to absorb prolonged tenancy disputes or limitations on removing non-performing tenants. This bill shifts disproportionate risk onto these smaller operators.

The bill’s broad prohibition framework creates ambiguity around permissible grounds for removal and may lead to increased litigation. Courts, property owners, and tenants alike will face uncertainty in application, which ultimately slows resolution and increases costs for all parties.

In jurisdictions where similar “just cause” frameworks have been adopted, there is evidence that owners respond by: (1) Converting rental units to other uses; (2) Increasing upfront screening and barriers to entry; or (3) Raising rents to hedge against increased regulatory risk. These outcomes run counter to the goal of improving housing access.

H8109 risks exacerbating Rhode Island’s housing crisis by discouraging investment, increasing costs, and reducing overall housing availability. As such, we respectfully urge the Committee to oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

*Gregory Tumolo*

Gregory Tumolo, Executive Director  
Rhode Island Business Leaders Alliance

CC: Members of the House Judiciary Committee