



**RHODE ISLAND COALITION
OF HOUSING PROVIDERS**

www.ricohp.org

March 16, 2026

To Honorable Representative Carol McEntee
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903
VIA Email: housejudiciary@rilegislature.gov

RE: Letter in OPPOSITION to Senate Bill No. 8109

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

We are writing to express our strong opposition to H8109 advocating for just cause eviction laws and rent control measures. This bill not only seeks to eliminate a property owner's right to serve a non-renewal notice to a resident at the end of the lease term, essentially granting residents an indefinite lease, but it also **implements rent control** with a 4% maximum annual increase. Economists agree that rent control does not work. Numerous academic studies have shown that rent control decreases housing investment and spending on upkeep, as well as implements severe destruction to the tax base. RIPEC has most recently released a report, "The High Cost of Rent Control in Providence", which provides relevant local analysis against such policies.

While we can sympathize with the concerns about long-term residents being unfairly displaced, we know that this approach is not the right solution and will have negative consequences for both property owners and residents.

Proponents of just cause eviction argue that it protects long-term residents from unscrupulous owners. However, just cause eviction restrictions severely limit property owners' ability to respond quickly to resident concerns and remove disruptive or threatening residents. These policies can destabilize rental communities, conflict with state problem property laws, and disincentivize investment in rental housing.

Under a just cause eviction system, housing providers are only allowed to evict tenants for specific reasons defined by law. While this may appear to offer reasonable protections, in practice, it significantly restricts a landlord's ability to manage their property effectively. Under this bill, landlords would no longer have the discretion to simply not renew a lease at the end of its term. Instead, they would be required to "show cause" and obtain a court order to remove a tenant, a process that can be particularly difficult in cases involving criminal activity.

In many instances, the burden of proof falls not on the landlord, but on neighboring tenants who are expected to provide evidence of wrongdoing. Understandably, many tenants are unwilling to come forward out of fear of retaliation or conflict, leaving landlords with little recourse to address problematic tenants. This often results in law-abiding tenants choosing to leave instead, effectively displacing innocent renters while the disruptive tenant remains. The inability of landlords to properly manage their properties under such restrictions ultimately harms the broader rental community, reducing housing stability and safety for all residents.

As experienced members of the community, we know that just cause eviction laws adversely shift the balance in the landlord and tenant relationship to the detriment of residents and the community as a whole. These policies put good residents at risk and can lead to disinvestment in rental housing, ultimately increasing rents for the community overall.

In conclusion, we urge you to consider the long-term impacts of over-regulation and the unintended consequences of just cause eviction laws and rent control. **No policy such as rent control should be implemented without a complete financial analysis and fiscal note.** We believe that there are more effective ways to protect long-term residents without imposing burdensome mandates on property owners.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Shannon Elizabeth Weinstein
On Behalf of The RI Coalition of Housing Providers

