



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

March 18, 2026

RE: Support for H8141 (Tenant's Right to Legal Representation Act)

Dear Chairwoman McEntee and Members of the Committee:

Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island ("Neighbors Welcome") is a nonprofit network of neighbors advocating for more homes in Rhode Island. Our goal is to promote strong and sustainable housing production so that residents across the state and at every stage of life have housing options that meet their needs.

We are writing today in support of the proposed bill H8141, which would grant tenants the right to legal representation in residential eviction proceedings.

Even as Rhode Island works to address its housing shortage, it is important that state leaders mitigate the displacement of existing residents and prevent the serious harms associated with eviction. Right to legal representation in eviction cases is proven to be an effective strategy to keep tenants in their homes, minimize disruptive moves, and expedite the resolution of landlord tenant disputes.

For example, Connecticut launched statewide right to counsel services in 2022, and has helped thousands of residents stay housed while saving the state millions of dollars in emergency shelter services, foster care, and Medicaid spending.¹ With the lack of housing options in Rhode Island, ensuring that our neighbors have a chance to stay in their homes is critical to community health and wellbeing.

We want to thank the bill sponsor, Representative Cruz, and cosponsors for their commitment to advancing housing stability in Rhode Island. Neighbors Welcome respectfully urges the Committee to support H8141.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristina Brown", written in a cursive style.

Kristina Brown | Executive Director | Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island

¹ [Connecticut Eviction Right to Counsel Annual Independent Evaluation](#), January 1 to November 30, 2025. Connecticut Bar Foundation (CBF). Stout, December 23, 2025.