

March 26, 2026

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

Re: Support for House Bill 8101 – Abandoned Property

Dear Chair McEntee:

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 8101, *An Act Relating to Property – Abandoned Property*. This legislation makes changes to Rhode Island's Abandoned Property Act to ensure the law is used as intended: to address genuinely abandoned, unsafe, or nuisance properties while protecting responsible property owners.

I wanted to share my story with you as a property owner who has experienced first hand the misuse of Rhode Island's Abandoned Property Act. I own a property in Woonsocket which has been in my family since 1974. My father was living there until his passing in February, 2023, after which it continued to be rented until May of 2023. While I don't live at the property, I am there several times each week and I have current homeowners insurance and am up to date on my property tax payments.

While there have been code violations, I have been in regular communication with the City about them and have undertaken significant improvements to address them including installing new siding and repointing the chimney. The property has NOT been placed in housing court due to code violations.

I first became aware that my property was the subject of a petition under the Abandoned Property Act when I visited the property and discovered that the locks had been changed on the doors and a notice had been nailed to my new siding informing me of the petition for a receiver. I had to secure legal representation to appeal this petition despite the fact that my property is not abandoned and in fact I have invested significant resources into improving it.

This bill will help to ensure that what happened to me, will not continue to happen to other responsible property owners. I urge you to support House Bill 8101.

Sincerely,  
James Zagrodny