



DONALD R. GREBIEN
MAYOR



March 23, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
Chairwoman
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island Statehouse
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for House Bill H8101 – Protecting Property Owners From Misuse of the Abandoned Property Act

Dear Honorable Chairwoman Hagan McEntee and Honorable House Judiciary Member:

I write on behalf of the City of Pawtucket in strong support of House Bill H8101, legislation that seeks to protect property owners from the misuse of the Abandoned Property Act while preserving its intended purpose as a tool to address truly abandoned and blighted properties.

The Abandoned Property Act has long served as an important mechanism for municipalities like Pawtucket to return distressed and vacant properties to productive use, helping to stabilize neighborhoods and advance local redevelopment efforts. When used appropriately, it is a valuable tool in combating blight and strengthening our communities.

However, we have seen troubling instances in recent years where the statute has been misapplied. Improper receivership petitions have the potential to disrupt municipal redevelopment projects and create unnecessary legal and financial burdens for property owners. Of particular concern is the risk posed to responsible homeowners who may be swept into these actions without cause or adequate notice.

In Pawtucket, this concern has become very real. Two properties with Rhode Island Housing mortgages were included in a receivership petition despite being owner-occupied by first-time homebuyers who were current on their mortgages and had no code violations or other infractions. These are precisely the types of homeowners we should be protecting, not placing at risk due to gaps in statutory language.

House Bill H8101 addresses these issues in a thoughtful and balanced manner. By tightening the criteria for what constitutes an abandoned or problem property and strengthening notification requirements, the legislation ensures that property owners are given proper notice and an opportunity to remedy any concerns before legal action is taken. At the same time, it

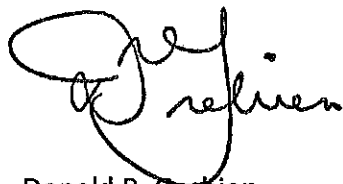
preserves the ability of municipalities to intervene where properties are truly neglected and harmful to the surrounding community.

This legislation is critical to maintaining the integrity of the Abandoned Property Act while protecting homeowners and supporting responsible redevelopment. It will help ensure that Pawtucket and communities across Rhode Island can continue revitalization efforts without unintended consequences for residents who are in good standing.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your favorable consideration and passage of House Bill H8101.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued partnership in strengthening our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Grebien". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "D" and a trailing flourish.

Donald R. Grebien
Mayor,
City of Pawtucket