



April 9th, 2026

House Judiciary Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903

### **Testimony in Support of H-8328**

The Alliance to Mobilize Our Resistance, AMOR, supports Representative Diaz's bill H-8328 that would allow individuals to request virtual court hearings. As an organization that works to support members of the Rhode Island immigrant community through immigration advocacy and case support, we can attest that virtual court hearings would bring immense relief to those targeted by ICE and increase attendance to court hearings.

Over the past two years under the current administration, we have witnessed ICE presence inside and outside court houses across Rhode Island. Through AMOR's work on the Deportation Defense Line and within our community we have seen folks targeted by ICE outside of traffic court, family court, and municipal courts across the state. While attempting to follow the law people in our community have been picked up by ICE leading to devastating impacts on their families and their community.

We've met people who have had to weigh the costs and benefits of attending court: being detained by ICE or facing the consequences of not attending their court appointment. The threat of detention and deportation forces families to make that impossible choice. We have also supported members of our community who have experienced intense fear and anxiety around attending court resulting in undue stress.

We know that virtual court hearings are something that the court is able to do. Based on our experience supporting folks with attending their virtual hearings for immigration court, and with our experiences with virtual court hearings during the initial years of the COVID pandemic, we know virtual court hearings are a functional alternative to in-person hearings.

Finally, in addition to supporting our immigrants and mixed status families facing the threat of being targeted by ICE at courts, virtual court hearings make attending court more accessible to other marginalized groups in our community. Virtual court hearings support folks who do not have access to reliable transportation, folks who are disabled, and folks who have strict workplace environments that make it difficult to take time off. Virtual courts are a good option for everyone in our community, not just our immigrant community.

We urge you to consider these points in favor of Representative Diaz's bill H-8328 that would codify in law a process to request remote hearings for all Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,

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