

**To:** Representative Carol Hagan McEntee, Chair of the House Judiciary Committee  
**From:** Joseph Baptista, lifelong Rhode Island resident  
**Date:** May 19, 2026

**Re: Landlord and Business Owner Support for House Bill 7199, Survivor Early Lease Termination**

Thank you for this opportunity to share my **support for House Bill 7199, sponsored by Rep. Karen Alzate**. I support this survivor safety bill that will provide crucial protections for victims and their children fleeing abuse, domestic/sexual violence, and stalking.

**I am also a landlord and a local RI business owner, as well as a lifelong Rhode Islander. I own a mortgage company here called Anchor Financial Mortgage. I own and rent out several properties here in Rhode Island. The fact that I am a local landlord and housing provider, and that I support this domestic violence survivor safety bill is important for a few reasons. I care about my tenants and their families; their wellbeing and safety is a priority for me.**

I want to explain why I support this commonsense bill for safety for local families. First, it's not a radical idea at all. 41 other states, including all of New England, New York, and New Jersey already have this law in place. **Passing this bill would simply add Rhode Island to that list, protecting both victims *and* landlords and property owners from dangerous and potentially deadly violence occurring at their property. This is a win-win in my view.**

**We have all seen the headlines and recent news coverage, including a tragic domestic violence homicide earlier this year in Pawtucket.** Violent and deadly domestic violence is happening far too often here in Rhode Island. Anything we can do to prevent violence and abuse from escalating to the point of something deadly is well worth it for me. If that means that every so often, I face the temporary inconvenience of finding a new tenant, for the sake of allowing someone to escape abuse and find safety, I will gladly do that. It's about safety for someone going through the worst situation of their life.

This bill is a reasonable, fair process when a tenant is in a scary, desperate, often life-or-death situation. I prioritize and value the safety of my tenants and their families, and I urge my elected officials to value the life of survivors and their children as much as I do, by passing this important legislation this year.

Thank you for your consideration and I urge you to pass this bill this year without further delay.

Sincerely,

*Joseph Baptista*