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From: Kathleen Layton <kathleenlayton75@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 10:28 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Support for House Bill 7199, RI Survivor Early Lease Termination

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To: Representative Carol Hagan McEntee, Chair of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Kathleen Layton

May 19, 2026

Support for House Bill 7119 Survivor Early Lease

Dear Representative Carol Hagan McEntee, Chair of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am Kathleen Layton of North Kingstown, Rhode Island and I write to support for House Bill 7199, sponsored by Representative Karen Alzate.

Domestic violence victims, and their children, NEED this financial and safety protection. Bill 7199 will provide important protections for victims and their children fleeing abuse, domestic/sexual violence, and stalking.

Passing this bill will help eligible folks terminate their lease early for safety reasons, without incurring fees or penalties. Rhode Island would make the process clear, with required tenant-victim documentation for eligibility provided to landlords.

I know victims who need these options and a few who could have used it at a painful time in their pasts. I also know coalition of Rhode Island survivors, domestic and sexual violence victim service providers, and advocates who champion this bill. We have done our research and reviewed similar laws from our neighboring New England states, all that already have this safe housing law.

Key provisions of the Survivor Early Lease Termination Act include:

- A prohibition on evictions, fees, and other penalties for abuse survivors who terminate their lease to flee for their safety.
- A prohibition on landlords disclosing confidential information obtained from survivors.
- A variety of methods survivors can use to verify their status with written documentation, including self-certification as found in other RI domestic abuse safety laws.

Forty-one states have passed early lease termination laws for survivors. Let's join them!

Thank you for your consideration and urge you to pass the bill this year.

Kathleen Layton

North Kingstown Democrats

Rhode Island Women Democrat Caucus