

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

From: Mary Emanuel, Rhode Island resident and RI landlord

Date: May 19, 2026

Re: **Support for House Bill 7199, RI Survivor Early Lease Termination**

I appreciate this opportunity to voice 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 I own property here in Rhode Island. I care about my tenants and their families; their wellbeing and safety is a priority for me. 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 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, violent and deadly domestic violence is happening far too often here in Rhode Island. Anything we 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. **Key provisions of the Survivor Early Lease Termination Act include:**

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

41 states already have early lease termination laws for survivors, with [New Hampshire joining this list in May 2024](#). Thank you for your consideration and I urge you to pass this bill.