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From: bounce@bounce.voterveice.net on behalf of Jason Boulay <jboulay@rhodyliving.com>
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Dear Committee Clerk DiMezza,

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding H8385 in its current form. While I support the intent of protecting young adult dependents who are named in eviction filings despite not being legally responsible parties on a lease, I believe the legislation requires additional clarification and procedural safeguards before moving forward.

At present, Rhode Island's court system does not appear to provide a mechanism for selectively sealing records for one individual within a broader eviction case file. Eviction proceedings are maintained as a single case record, rather than segmented by party. Without structural and procedural changes to court record systems, the bill's intended protections may prove difficult to implement consistently in practice.

I am also concerned that the bill's language may be overly broad and subject to inconsistent interpretation. As written, it could potentially extend sealing protections to individuals who bear legal or financial responsibility under a tenancy arrangement, rather than being limited strictly to non-responsible dependents. Greater clarity is needed to distinguish between dependents, occupants, co-tenants, and other responsible parties.

Additionally, housing providers rely on accurate court records to make informed decisions regarding tenancy risk, financial responsibility, and prior housing disputes. While narrowly tailored sealing protections may be appropriate in certain circumstances, expanding categories of sealed eviction records raises concerns about the gradual erosion of transparency within the housing court system. Any expansion of sealing authority should therefore be carefully defined and accompanied by appropriate safeguards.

I respectfully urge consideration of the following amendments:

- * Incorporate judicial discretion to ensure sealing is applied only in appropriate cases;
- * Clearly define "dependent" and distinguish non-responsible occupants from co-tenants or financially liable parties;
- * Establish a practical procedural mechanism for selective sealing of records at the individual level;
- * Include safeguards to prevent inconsistent application or unintended abuse of the sealing process.

I believe it is possible to protect vulnerable individuals while also maintaining fairness, accountability, and transparency within Rhode Island's housing system.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

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