



State of Rhode Island COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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BILL NO.: 2026 H 8504
BILL TITLE: An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Fair Employment Practices
PRIMARY SPONSOR: Representative Leonela Felix
COMMITTEE: Senate Committee on Labor

The Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights (“Commission”) supports this bill.

The Commission is the state’s primary antidiscrimination law enforcement agency charged with investigating allegations of discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, credit and delivery of services. Among the laws over which the Commission has jurisdiction is the Fair Employment Practices Act, Title 28, Chapter 5 of the General Laws of Rhode Island (“FEPA”).

This bill seeks to amend the definition of “employee” within the FEPA to remove language exempting people who work “in the domestic service of any person” from the protections of the FEPA. Currently, the FEPA provides no protection for a domestic service employee if, for example, an employer subjects such an employee to racial slurs or other forms of harassment based on a protected class. The Commission believes that all of Rhode Island’s workers, regardless of the type of work they do, deserve protection from employment discrimination and harassment. **For this reason, the Commission strongly urges the Committee to pass this bill.**

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