

OPPOSE House Bills No. 7655, 7891, 7987, and 7989

Hello,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to several housing bills currently under consideration, namely House Bills No. 7655, 7891, 7987, and 7989. While I appreciate the efforts to address various aspects of housing affordability and tenant protection, I believe that these proposed measures are deeply flawed and could have significant negative consequences for property owners, tenants, and the broader housing market in Rhode Island.

House Bill No. 7655, sponsored by Speakman, Henries, Morales, and Felix, seeks to grant a right of first offer to qualified nonprofits for the purchase of certain multi-family residential properties at market prices. While the goal of promoting affordable rental housing is commendable, this approach could infringe upon property rights and distort market dynamics.

House Bill No. 7891, presented by Sanchez, proposes to authorize the city of Providence to adopt rent control ordinances, subject to certain exemptions. Rent control has been shown to have adverse effects on housing supply, quality, and affordability, and empowering municipalities to implement such policies could exacerbate housing challenges in Rhode Island.

House Bill No. 7987, introduced by Cruz, Stewart, Speakman, Morales, Potter, Ajello, Kislak, Felix, and Sanchez, mandates that housing code enforcement officers provide copies of housing code violation notices to all tenants affected by violations. While transparency and tenant awareness are important, this requirement may impose undue burdens on property owners and enforcement agencies.

House Bill No. 7989, also sponsored by Sanchez, would authorize cities and towns to establish housing authorities to adopt tenant protection measures, including rent control and restrictions on no-fault evictions. Granting such broad authority to local entities could create inconsistencies and uncertainty in housing regulations across different jurisdictions.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to reject House Bills No. 7655, 7891, 7987, and 7989 and instead focus on alternative policy solutions that promote housing affordability, tenant rights, and economic prosperity without undermining property rights or distorting market mechanisms.

Thank you for considering my perspective on these important issues. I am hopeful that, through collaborative efforts and thoughtful deliberation, we can develop effective and equitable housing policies for the benefit of all Rhode Islanders.

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