

11 April 2024

To the Members of the Rhode Island House Committee on Municipal Government & Housing,

My name is Aaron Epstein, and I am writing to express my **support for the two bills H7891 & H7989**. Together, these two bills establish and protect rent control in Providence and other cities and towns in Rhode Island.

Multiple national and local news reports have already highlighted the shocking fact that Providence has the fastest inflating rent prices in the country. This is obviously a *crisis* that continues to enact major consequences on all aspects of people's lives, including general welfare, financial agency, and health. It makes little sense that rents continue to rise at incredibly high rates when people's wages and living conditions do not.

The two bills that I am supporting provide a very concrete solution to Rhode Island's housing crisis. With nothing currently in place to prevent landlords from arbitrarily raising prices of rent from month to month, it is no surprise that many landlords abuse this fact to raise rents as they wish (with a few even using this as a tactic to threaten and evict tenants).

Rent stabilization is a step towards fixing this urgent problem in Rhode Island. The state needs to put in measures to limit rent prices at this crucial juncture in time when more people are housing insecure than ever. Housing is a human right, and if Rhode Island is to stand by this principle, we need to prevent rents from being more and more unaffordable.

Thank you for considering my testimony and for your commitment to ensuring fair and equitable housing in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,
Aaron Epstein