

Dear Legislative Committee,

I am writing this letter to express my unequivocal **SUPPORT FOR BILLS HB7989 AND HB7891**. The housing crisis in Providence has reached a point where the workers that enrich the community and carry the economy on their backs are all being exploited into a state of housing insecurity. We **MUST** institute oversight committees and regulations on landlord practices and institute protections for renters, because all too often landlords operate with impunity and enact rent increases far beyond any justifiable reason, while also neglecting their responsibility to provide safe and healthy housing. Too often landlords leave rental units in states of decay that they themselves would find unacceptable if they were forced to live there. This is a form of classist violence that has heretofore been enabled by a lack of oversight and regulation. **THE WORKERS DESERVE SAFE AND HEALTHY HOUSING AT REASONABLE RATES THAT ALLOW THE WORKERS FINANCIAL MOBILITY AND FREEDOM**. Being a landlord will no longer be tolerated as a form of classist power or a primary source of income. We as Rhode Islanders inherit a legacy of progressive legislation that protects **ALL** its citizens, with no preferential treatment based on financial bracket. These two bills are a **great start** in creating a housing market that enables all workers and renters the opportunity to live and thrive in safe communities.

I have just recently been forced into housing insecurity at the hands of a predatory landlord. He threatened to raise my rent 67% on a fabricated claim that we made a “gentleman’s agreement” to be his on-call pro-bono worker, of which there is no record. He then accused me of damages to the apartment, while never taking even an initial step in fixing the multiple infestations, leaks, unreliable heat & hot water, and cracked & peeling floors that pose a risk of injury due to faulty installation. I have spoken with previous tenants of his, and they complain of the exact same kind of gaslighting and self-serving distortions of truth. I have already come to terms with the likelihood that he will keep my deposit on erroneous claims, because I cannot devote time to taking him to small claims court. This is exactly why we need regulations that pre-emptively curtail landlords from abusing their power. These two bills are a **great start** to ensuring that all Rhode Island residents have safe housing and are not subject to landlord greed.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

Stefan DiPippo

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