



February 27, 2025

Dear Chairman Casey.  
Members, House Municipal Government & Housing Committee

**Re: H5309**

The Senior Agenda Coalition of RI (SACRI) supports H5309, AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION – PROPERTY SUBJECT TO TAXATION sponsored by Representatives Voas, Giraldo, Messier, Stewart, Casey, Finkelman, Marszalkowski, DeSimone, Read and Solomon.

SACRI's mission is to mobilize people to implement an agenda that improves the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders and adults with disabilities. We accomplish this through *community organizing, public education, advocacy, and legislative action*. Addressing affordability and accessibility of housing is a priority for SACRI.

Tax exemptions are one way of providing relief from property taxes by exempting all or part of a home's value. A number of Rhode Island municipalities provide for some type of property tax exemption tied to certain criteria such as age, disability, income and veteran's status. H5309 increases the minimum Veteran's property tax exemption from the current \$1,000 to \$6,000. Veterans' property tax exemptions vary across Rhode Island municipalities. While some fall below the \$6,000 limit called for in current law, many municipalities exceed the \$6,000.

Rhode Island has one of the highest population of veterans. Census data shows the vast majority of R.I. veterans are Vietnam War veterans and those age 65 and older (ACS 2023 table S2101). For older homeowners, property taxes are often their largest tax expense. Census data shows that 34% of older homeowners in R.I. are housing cost burdened paying more than 30% of their income on housing related costs. Property tax exemptions can help to offset this burden. As housing prices have ridden so dramatically in the last several years increasing the veterans' tax exemption to a minimum of \$6,000 would bring some relief from burdensome property taxes to some older veteran homeowners.

Thank you for your consideration of SACRI's support for this legislation.