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RE: House Bill No.7567

Re: Support for House Bill 7567-An Act Relating to Taxation-Levy and Assessment of Local Taxes-Tax Deferral Program

Dear Chairman Casey and members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 7567, which would establish a statewide property tax deferral program for senior citizens, disabled persons, and veterans.

This legislation would allow eligible homeowners to defer property tax payments until their home is sold or transferred. For many older adults living on fixed incomes, this type of relief can make a meaningful difference in their ability to remain safely and securely in their homes.

Property taxes continue to rise while retirement incomes often do not keep pace. As a result, many older adults are forced to make difficult and sometimes dangerous choices—paying property taxes instead of purchasing medications, postponing medical appointments, cutting back on food, limiting utility use, or delaying essential home maintenance. These tradeoffs can negatively affect health, safety, and overall quality of life.

Helping older adults remain in their homes benefits not only the individual homeowner, but also the broader community. Stable homeownership supports neighborhood continuity, preserves community ties, and helps maintain property values. When long-time residents are pushed out due to rising costs, communities lose stability and connection.

Rising property taxes should not force older Rhode Islanders, disabled residents, or veterans out of the homes they have spent a lifetime building and maintaining. A property tax deferral program offers a balanced and compassionate solution—providing relief now while allowing municipalities to collect the deferred taxes later when the property changes ownership.

House Bill 7567 recognizes the financial realities faced by many residents and provides a practical way to support housing stability, dignity, and independence.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support House Bill 7567. Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to the well-being of Rhode Island residents.

Sincerely,

Marianne Kelly