



State of Rhode Island
Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos

March 4, 2026

Representative Stephen M. Casey
Chair, House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing
82 Smith St, Room 101
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Letter of Support for HB8000: An Act Relating To Property -- Homeless Bill Of Rights

Dear Representative Casey:

I write to you in enthusiastic support for each H 8000: An Act Relating To Property -- Homeless Bill Of Rights.

Surprise encampment sweeps can be devastating for people living on the streets and typically fail to address the root causes of homelessness. Without adequate time to prepare, homeless individuals can find themselves bereft of the few possessions they own, including family heirlooms and vital documents, with no clear instructions on where their items have gone. These sweeps don't solve the problem of homelessness, but just push the problem away, typically further away from the resources needed to get people housed.

In instances where the removal of a homelessness encampment is a necessary health and safety operation, the people living in those encampments deserve advanced notice, in multiple languages, with clear information on how to access their possessions once the clearance has taken place. This bill would require any agency tasked with clearing encampments situated on public property to provide at least 15 days advanced written notice to the occupants stating the timeframe to vacate the encampment.

I believe that, here in Rhode Island, we possess the tools, resources, human capital, and skills needed to ensure that every resident has a safe and habitable home. I look forward to continuing this work, and I urge you to vote this bill favorably out of committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabina Matos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sabina Matos

Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor