



March 30, 2026

**Statement of Support from Pacific Legal Foundation for House Bill 8036—  
A bill to allow co-living and single room occupancy**

Chair Casey and Members of the House Municipal Government and Housing Committee:

My name is Jaimie Cavanaugh, and I am Senior State Policy Counsel at Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF). PLF is a nonprofit public interest law firm dedicated to defending Americans' liberties when threatened by government overreach and abuse. Since its founding more than 50 years ago, PLF has been helping Americans protect their constitutional rights in courthouses and state houses across the country.

PLF has 18 victories at the United States Supreme Court and has worked to enact more than 60 laws nationwide. PLF is most well-known for its work protecting private property rights.

Thank you for considering House Bill 8036. This is a simple bill that will have a significant impact on the people of Rhode Island by allowing homeowners to rent out rooms in their home. It seeks to alleviate the ongoing housing shortage by providing renters and homeowners flexibility and more options.

Renting out rooms or spaces in one's home is a traditional use of property and the practice benefits both landlords and tenants. It provides an affordable housing option for people at all different stages of their lives and it also makes the cost of homeownership more attainable for some by providing extra income. Importantly, this bill ensures that the constitutional rights of homeowners are respected by protecting their freedom to choose their household companions.

Laws and ordinances that restrict homeowners from renting rooms not only deprive them of their rights, they contribute to the problem of high housing costs and limited options for individuals who need choices in rental housing. These laws also ignore the fact that many people are only able to make housing investments in their communities and achieve the dream of home ownership if they can share their home with others.

Renting is also often a first step toward saving for home ownership, but it can be a great long-term housing solution for many, too. Homeowners who are able to rent rooms are an integral part of a thriving housing market. As America faces a housing shortage, governments should allow housing markets to flourish and meet the unique needs and life situations of citizens.

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For these reasons, PLF urges this Committee's support for this bill. Please let me know if I can answer any questions.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Jaimie Cavanaugh in black ink.

Jaimie Cavanaugh

Senior State Policy Counsel

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