



March 17, 2026

Dear Chair Alzate and Members, House Special Legislation Committee

Re: Support for H7665

SACRI is delighted to support H7665 sponsored by Rep. Lauren Carson and initiated by the Office of Healthy Aging. National Senior Centers month is an annual observance established by the National Institute of Senior Centers (NISC) and the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to highlight the vital role the approximately 11,000 senior centers across the country play in supporting the health and well-being of older adults. Initially, the celebration started as a week in September back in 1979 but in 2007 the National Institute of Senior Centers changed to a full month.

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. It accomplishes this through *community organizing, public education, advocacy, legislative action and through impactful partnerships with organizations supportive of older adults.*

Since its early years, SACRI has had a strong partnership with our community senior centers in recognition of the extraordinary work these centers do to keep our older adults healthy and socially connected. When state funding for senior centers was decreased during challenging state fiscal years, SACRI fought hard to restore that funding. And we have advocated increasing state general revenue funding for senior centers every year so that it reaches a level of \$10 per person age 65 and over in each of our communities.

A body of research shows the value of the programs and services provided by senior centers. This includes better management of some chronic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure and lowering the risk of loneliness and depression through the social connections participants make.

We urge you to recommend passage of H7665 to the full House and look forward to it becoming law and joining in many celebrations in honor of our Senior Centers in September 2026.

Sincerely,
Carol Anne Costa, SACRI Executive Director
Maureen Maigret, SACRI Policy Advisor

