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ACLU OF RI POSITION: SUPPORT

**TESTIMONY ON 22-H 7736,
AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT – RACE, ETHNICITY,
GENDER, AND DISABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT ACT
April 6, 2022**

As the legacy of legislation has shown throughout the years, oftentimes a facially neutral policy can have devastating consequences on certain demographics – a fact that has been shown time and time again in examinations of housing policy, criminal justice policy, education policy and more throughout the decades. The effect has led to long-lasting and deeply rooted discriminatory implications for BIPOC communities in particular.

For this reason, we strongly support this legislation which would require a race, ethnicity, gender, and disability impact statement to accompany proposed legislation. Doing so would not only acknowledge that our governmental systems have sometimes worked, however unintentionally, to discriminate against vulnerable populations, but it would ensure that all future legislation has in its initial purview the possible ramifications or benefits to disadvantaged groups.

We believe this legislation embodies good public policy and represents an important way of centering marginalized communities in working for an ethos in the state that deliberately and carefully avoids further exacerbating the many racial and other inequities that exist in our law.

Thank you for your consideration.