



March 17, 2025

#### Testimony in Support of H-5515 – Same Day Voter Registration

Dear Chair Shanley and Honorable Members of the House State Government and Elections Committee,

On behalf of SEIU 1199 New England, which represents over 5,000 healthcare and service sector workers across Rhode Island, we write in support of H-5515, which would establish same day voter registration. This bill ensures that all eligible Rhode Islanders have the opportunity to participate in our democracy without unnecessary barriers.

Many hardworking Rhode Islanders, including our members in healthcare and service industries, work long and unpredictable hours. These workers may not always be able to meet existing voter registration deadlines, especially when juggling multiple jobs, caregiving responsibilities, and other obligations. Same day voter registration provides a much-needed safeguard, ensuring that no eligible voter is turned away simply because they missed a deadline.

#### Why H-5515 Matters

- Expands access to the ballot box by allowing eligible voters to register and vote on the same day.
- Reduces disenfranchisement, particularly for those who move frequently or have unpredictable work schedules.
- Brings Rhode Island in line with many other states that have successfully implemented same day voter registration without issue.

#### A Practical and Proven Reform

States that have adopted same day voter registration have seen **increased voter participation**, particularly among working people, first-time voters, and those who might otherwise face obstacles in the registration process. Studies have shown that same day voter registration **does not increase administrative burdens** and can be implemented smoothly with proper planning and resources.

H-5515 strengthens our democracy by making it easier for all Rhode Islanders to exercise their fundamental right to vote. SEIU 1199NE urges the committee to support and pass this bill to ensure that no eligible voter is denied the opportunity to have their voice heard.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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