

Regina Clement's Testimony Supporting: 7303

To: Chairman Shanley and the Members of the HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS:

My name is Regina Clement and I am a resident of Providence. My State Senator is Jake Bissaillon and my State Representative is David Morales. I am providing testimony today as a Rhode Island voter speaking in strong support of **H-7303**, *Same Day Registration Resolution* that will help make permanent many of the policies the state put in place to ensure secure voting access during our general elections.

Passing this resolution will allow for the Rhode Island Constitution to be amended to remove the restrictions that allows qualified residents to vote in elections they did not register for in the timeframe the RI constitution states. Currently, 22 states and the District of Columbia offer Same Day Registration, which means any qualified resident of the state can register to vote and cast a ballot at the same time. Unfortunately, Rhode Island is not included in this count. Rhode Island's 30-day voter registration deadline disproportionately affects Black and Brown Communities, youth, low-income voters, and populations who are not more geographically mobile.

As a Black women and member of the Providence Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. I have been committed to the idea that every qualified U.S. citizen has the right to cast their ballot and have their ballot counted. That commitment led to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.'s participation in the Women's Suffrage March in 1913, our presence at the March on Washington in 1963, and our support for legislation that seeks to protect voters as they exercise their constitutional right to vote throughout our history. Over the last few years, I have seen a serious attack on those ideals starting with the dismantling of the Voter Rights Act of 1965. Since the 2020 elections, which had historic voter turnout, many states have enacted voting laws that harken back to the days of Jim Crow.

By removing this statute, access to voting is improved and eliminates this arbitrary and restrictive voter registration deadline and allows Rhode Islanders in **EVERY** community to exercise their right to vote. I urge this committee to support of **H-7303** and recommend it's passage. It is the right thing to do to provide access and opportunity to vote for myself and thousands of our fellow Rhode Islanders. It also supports efforts to remove barriers to voting for qualified residents and increases voter participation.

Sincerely,
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