

To: House State Government and Elections Committee

From: Arianna Arias

Date: April 16, 2026

Subject: Support for H8334

Dear Chairman Shanley,

I am writing in support of passing the Rhode Island Voting Rights Act. As a social worker who has worked in both macro and clinical practice, it is a critical time more than ever to protect our voting rights as a democratic state. Working in my discipline and as a Spanish speaker, I've seen how language access can empower individuals to exercise their freedom to vote. I previously worked at an agency where I conducted a voter registration project. The purpose of the project was to help naturalized citizens register to vote, teach them how to figure out who their representatives are, and provide them with the dates of the next election dates in their cities/towns. It was empowering to see so many people eager to engage and learn about the voting process, especially when that learning came from someone who spoke their language and could answer questions they had. Given this, I have seen firsthand that many individuals from communities where English is not their first language are ready to actively participate their rights. It is critical to ensure that their voices are heard and regarded as every community deserves a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their daily lives. The very notion of democracy is under constant attack, and this bill provides the tools to combat the very discriminatory voting laws and policies that are trying to be put in place. I hope my perspective as someone who works closely with affected communities helps demonstrate why this bill matters. I strongly urge the committee to support this bill. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Arianna Arias

West Warwick, RI