



April 16, 2026

Dear Rep. Shanley and Members, House State Government and Elections Committee

RE: Support for H8334

The mission of the Senior Agenda Coalition (SACRI) is to mobilize people to achieve power in order to implement an agenda that improves the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders and adults with disabilities. Achieving power requires that persons are allowed to freely exercise their right to vote without intimidation and discrimination.

SACRI strongly supports H8334 (Secretary of State), the Rhode Island Voting Rights Act sponsored by Representatives Kazarian, Shanley, Fogarty, Edwards, Furtado, Messier, Alzate, Casimiro, Stewart, and Boylan. This bill will put into state law federal protections to ensure the voting rights of Rhode Island voters are protected despite federal attacks that would attempt to deny minorities from exercising their right to vote.

Unfortunately, over time the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its amendments have been weakened by federal court rulings and by an unfriendly Department of Justice leading many states to pass laws to protect voting rights.

H8334 would prohibit voter suppression and vote dilution and protect against voter intimidation and discrimination. It allows groups and individuals to sue in the state courts. It provides thresholds for requiring language assistance for voters with limited English proficiency and requires that any voter who requires assistance at any stage of the voting process, by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read, write, or understand any aspect of the voting process, has the right to receive assistance from any person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.

SACRI respectfully urges you to act favorably on this legislation to protect voting rights and thanks you for your consideration.

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