



March 16th, 2026

Honorable House Committee on Health and Human Services

RE: Testimony SUPPORTING HB 7929

Dear Chair and Honorable Committee Members,

I am writing in my capacity as the Rhode Island State Long Term Care Ombudsman in support of House Bill 7929, which would limit the ability of long term care facilities to charge rent and associated fees following a resident's death to a maximum of seven days or until the resident's personal belongings are removed, whichever occurs first.

In addition to grieving, families are often faced with unexpected financial burdens, including charges for extended periods commonly up to 30 days after the resident has passed away. These charges can feel both confusing and distressing, particularly when the room is no longer occupied and the family is working diligently to remove personal belongings.

House Bill 7929 introduces a reasonable and compassionate standard. Limiting charges to seven days or until belongings are removed acknowledges the practical time families need to make arrangements, while preventing excessive or prolonged financial obligations that do not reflect actual occupancy or care provided.

Families should not be penalized during a period of loss with fees that extend far beyond the time necessary to transition the space. A seven-day limit strikes an appropriate balance between allowing facilities time to prepare a room for a new resident and protecting families from unnecessary costs.

At its core, this bill reflects a commitment to dignity not only in life, but in how we treat individuals and their families after death. It ensures that policies align with compassion, common sense, and respect. I respectfully urge the Committee to support House Bill 7929.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to Rhode Island's older adults and their families.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Light
Rhode Island State Long Term Care Ombudsman

**OFFICE OF THE RHODE ISLAND STATE
LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN**

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