



April 14, 2026

The Honorable Robert Britto
Chair, Senate Commerce Committee
Rhode Island State House, 82 Smith Street, Providence RI 02903

Re: In Support of S-2206

Dear Chair Britto and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI) in **support of Senate Bill 2206**. HNRI is a statewide alliance of members and partners serving low-income Rhode Islanders, who share the vision that all Rhode Islanders live in safe, healthy, affordable homes in thriving communities.

While we often focus on housing production and preservation, we know that housing stability is deeply connected to financial stability, and that predatory lending practices can quickly destabilize individuals and families. We are a member of the RI Predatory Lending Reform Coalition and believe that harmful financial practices are fundamental issues of housing and economic security.

This bill does two important things. First, it ensures that out-of-state, state-chartered banks must follow Rhode Island's interest rate caps—between 21% and 36% APR—rather than bypassing them through loopholes. Second, it establishes a clear definition of a “true lender,” based on who holds the predominant economic interest in the loan. This prevents fintech companies from evading consumer protections while still profiting from high-cost lending.

For the thousands of low- and moderate-income residents that our alliance members serve, including more than 10,000 residents of affordable housing across Rhode Island, these protections are significant. Many low- and moderate-income households are already balancing rising rents, limited wages, and economic uncertainty. When high-interest financial products enter the picture, they can quickly lead to cycles of debt that make it harder to pay rent, maintain housing, or recover from a financial setback.

We see every day how fragile housing stability can be—and how quickly it can be undermined by systems that are not designed with people's best interests in mind. This legislation helps ensure that Rhode Islanders are not exposed to exploitative lending practices that prioritize profit over people. S-2206 is a practical, commonsense step toward aligning our financial systems with our values as a state—fairness, transparency, and protection for those most at risk.

We respectfully urge your support, and thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Katie West

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