



May 5, 2026

Dear Chair DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

SACRI (The Senior Agenda Coalition of RI) is pleased to support S2246, The Rhode Island Family Caregiver Tax Credit Act, sponsored by Senators Ujifusa, Lawson, Ciccone, Tikoian, DiPalma, Zurier, DiMario, E Morgan, Acosta, and Felag. This bill is a component of SACRI's Affordability Agenda for Older Adults.

SACRI works to improve the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders and those who care for them. We do this through advocacy, community organizing and education. SACRI has a special focus on promoting home and community-based care and supporting our hundreds of unpaid family caregivers of older adults who assist with such care. Today, we are asking you to create a state caregiver tax credit to help our older caregivers with expenses incurred as they care for older loved ones and adults with disabilities at home. Such a tax credit will demonstrate you value the care they provide, recognize the financial burden caregiving may incur for them and that you recognize the care they provide offsets future Medicaid spending.

According to the Administration for Community Living someone turning 65 today has almost a 70% chance of needing some type of long term care supports in their remaining years. The vast proportion of such care is provided by unpaid family caregivers. As the state population continues to grow older supporting family caregivers is more important than ever. RI is one of the five US states with the highest percent of persons age 85+, the age group most likely to have support needs. The predicted homecare worker shortage amplifies the need to support family caregivers who today often provide an intense level of nursing care.

According to the AARP *Valuing the Invaluable 2026: Family Caregivers' Contributions Reach \$1 Trillion* report, the contributions of unpaid family caregivers in RI are estimated at \$2.8 Billion (based on \$25.07/hour by 155,000 caregivers for 111,000,000 hours of care). While family caregivers may get great satisfaction from caregiving, they often incur physical and financial stresses. The AARP report noted an average out-of-pocket cost of \$7,200 per year being incurred by unpaid caregivers. Such costs can be a financial burden for low-income older adult caregivers on fixed incomes. A number of states including Georgia, Missouri, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Carolina have created caregiver tax credit programs to offset the financial burden of caring for a family member.

The credit allowed in S2246 is reasonable. It would be available for family caregivers with incomes up to \$50,000 for a single person (\$100,000 couple) caring for persons age 65 and older and those on Social Security Disability who need help with at least two activities of daily living. Eligible expenses would include purchase or lease of medical equipment, and homecare aide services not covered by insurance or government programs. The credit for up to 50% of eligible expenses would be capped at \$1,000.

We urge you to vote to recommend passage of this legislation to give RI caregivers of older adults and persons with disabilities some financial relief and as a way of recognizing their value.

Carol Anne Costa, SACRI Executive Director
Maureen Maignet, SACRI Policy Advisor