



The Honorable Louis DiPalma
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
Providence RI 02903

May 7, 2026

Re: Support for S2681 – State Funded Rental Subsidy Program

Dear Chair DiPalma and Members of the Committee,

Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island (“Neighbors Welcome”) is a nonprofit network of neighbors advocating for more homes in Rhode Island. Our goal is to promote strong and sustainable housing production so that residents across the state and at every stage of life have housing options that meet their needs.

We are writing today in support of the proposed bill S2681, which would establish a state-funded rental subsidy program in Rhode Island.

The housing shortage and acute lack of affordable housing has resulted in the number of Rhode Islanders experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness skyrocket. The rising costs of housing have made it impossible for working families at the lower end of the income spectrum to afford any housing.

The lowest income households in Rhode Island are earning less than 30% of Area Median Income. This is less than \$24,000 per year for a single person or \$31,000 for a household of three. Individuals with disabilities that are unable to work and receive only Supplemental Security Income earn closer to \$12,000 per year, meaning they can only afford rent of \$300 a month. Rental subsidies are necessary to bridge the gap between what these individuals can pay and the actual cost of housing.

Establishing a state-funded rental assistance program would significantly decrease displacement, housing insecurity, and homelessness.

Providing stable housing is significantly less expensive than emergency shelters, hospitals, and crisis services. By stably housing those at risk of homelessness and those experiencing homelessness, we reduce long-term public costs. Housing stability for residents of all incomes adds to the vibrancy of our communities and supports our economy by making sure all workers, at every level, have access to safe and stable housing.



We want to thank the bill sponsor, Senator Murray and cosponsor Senator Bissailon for their commitment to addressing the housing crisis and advancing housing stability in Rhode Island. Neighbors Welcome respectfully urges the Committee to support S2681.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristina Brown", written in a cursive style.

Kristina Brown
Executive Director
Neighbors Welcome! Rhode Island