



# State of Rhode Island COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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## TESTIMONY

BILL NO.: 2026 S 2681  
BILL TITLE: An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Housing- State-Funded Rental Subsidy Program  
PRIMARY SPONSOR: Senator Murray  
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance  
Date: May 7, 2026

*The Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights (“Commission”) requests an amendment to this bill.*

The Commission is the state’s primary antidiscrimination law enforcement agency charged with investigating allegations of discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, credit and delivery of services. Among the laws over which the Commission has jurisdiction are Title 34, Chapter 37, the Fair Housing Practices Act, which prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, disability, source of income and other protected categories.

S 2681 establishes a state-funded rental subsidy program administered by the Rhode Island Executive Office of Housing. **One section of the bill contains language could cause confusion as to whether it gives the Executive Office of Housing authority to enforce the state’s Fair Housing Practices Act, though the Commission already enforces that Act.** This would cause confusion about which agency a person denied fair housing should report to and how the Executive Office of Housing would ensure compliance. As it is currently worded in the bill, § 45-71-5 provides "The administering agency as defined in § 45-71-1 [Rhode Island Executive Office of Housing] shall ensure compliance with all federal and state nondiscrimination laws, including fair housing protections related to source of income." The Commission suggests that this section be amended to read as follows:

§ 45-71-5. Nondiscrimination and fair housing. "**In the administration of this program,** ~~¶~~the administering agency as defined in § 45-71-1 shall ~~ensure~~ **monitor** compliance with all federal and state nondiscrimination laws, including fair housing protections related to source of income."

The Commission submits that the amendment better expresses the section’s intent.

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