

May 7, 2026

Honorable Louis DiPalma  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Rhode Island State House

**Re: Support for S2681 – State-Funded Rental Subsidy Program**

Dear Chair DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

We, the undersigned organizations and advocates, write in strong support of **S2681**, legislation to establish a **State-Funded Rental Subsidy Program** to help Rhode Islanders experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness access safe, stable, and affordable homes.

Rhode Island has made important progress in expanding housing supply through bonds, zoning reform, and production incentives. Those efforts are essential. Yet for many households with the lowest incomes—including seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, and individuals exiting homelessness—new housing alone does not solve the affordability gap. Many Rhode Islanders simply do not earn enough to afford available rents, even in subsidized developments.

Today, Rhode Island faces a shortage of more than **23,000 rental homes affordable and available to extremely low-income households**, and more than **70% of extremely low-income renters are cost-burdened**. The result is visible in every community: longer shelter stays, increased housing instability, and more people forced into unsafe or unsheltered situations.

S2681 creates a practical and proven tool to address this challenge by establishing a state rental subsidy that can be paired with housing production and resources to create deeply affordable homes. By ensuring eligible households pay no more than 30% of income toward rent, the program would help bridge the gap between extremely low household incomes and the actual cost of operating quality housing.

This legislation is important because it would:

- **Create housing pathways out of homelessness** for Rhode Islanders with the greatest needs.
- **Leverage and complement federal resources** that are limited and increasingly uncertain.
- **Support long-term housing stability** through project-based subsidies tied to specific apartments.

- **Protect public resources** by reducing costly reliance on emergency shelters, hospitals, crisis systems, and corrections.
- **Strengthen Rhode Island's housing delivery system** by making more developments financially feasible for vulnerable populations.

Housing stability improves health, employment, educational outcomes, and community well-being. Investing in permanent housing solutions is both compassionate and fiscally responsible.

Rhode Island has shown leadership in tackling the housing shortage. Passing S2681 is the next strategic step to ensure that our most vulnerable neighbors are not left behind.

We respectfully urge you to support **S2681** and advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Amos House  
Better Lives Rhode Island  
Blackstone Valley Community Action Program  
Church Community Housing Corporation  
Community Care Alliance  
Community Housing Land Trust of Rhode Island  
Crossroads Rhode Island  
Economic Progress Institute  
Foster Forward  
Housing Network of Rhode Island  
Housing Works RI  
Legal Key Partnership for Health and Justice  
NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley  
Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL)  
RAMP real access motivates progress  
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness  
RI Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty  
Rhode Island Community Action Association  
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team  
Sojourner House  
WARM Center, Inc.  
Washington Square Services  
Warwick Housing Authority  
West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation  
Women's Development Corporation

## Individuals in Support

Charlie Thomas-Davison, Warwick  
Ben Darby, Providence  
Brady Dunklee, Providence  
Jessica Kiebler, Smithfield  
Monica Teixeira de Sousa, Cranston  
Tanya Tanksley, Pawtucket  
Monica Maye, Cranston  
Bernie Beaudreau, East Providence  
Taylor Ellis, South Kingstown; RI Homeless Advocacy Project  
Lev Poplow, DARE  
Michelle Wilcox, Coventry  
Maria E. Rico  
Terri Wright, Providence; RI Homeless Advocacy Project, RI Poor People's Campaign  
Derek Bowman, Providence  
Rae McCaskill, Providence  
Katie West, Warwick  
Melina Lodge, Warwick  
Paula Hudson Providence  
Carlota Burgo  
Marisa Rodriguez  
Paul M. Dumouchel, Smithfield RI  
Larissa Paolantonio, Pawtucket RI  
Julie Trudeau Paolantonio, Charlestown, RI  
Mary Pendergast, Sisters of Mercy  
Angela Howard-McParland, Sisters of Mercy, Cranston  
Kendra Anderson, Warwick  
Rev. Sarah Reed Jay, Providence  
Stefan Cabral, Warwick  
Councilman John Goncalves, Providence  
Peter Nightingale, Kingston, RI  
Dr. Molly Richard, East Providence; University of Rhode Island  
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Tracy Johnson, Warwick  
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Stephen Ostiguy, Newport  
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Scott Marcil, Cranston, RI  
Paula B. McFarland, Cranston, RI