



May 4, 2026
Senator Louis DiPalma, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence RI 02903

**RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2848
JOINT RESOLUTION MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$500,000
TO SOJOURNER HOUSE IN RHODE ISLAND**

Chair DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of United Way Rhode Island, we strongly support S 2848, which authorizes the appropriation of the sum of \$500,000 to Sojourner House to support its permanent housing development program that provides safe, secure housing to individuals and families fleeing from dangerous situations.

Sojourner House received 234 referrals in 2025 from 211, the human service helpline housed at United Way of Rhode Island. These calls and visits hold some of the most challenging, complex needs that any community member presents because the danger of domestic violence has now exceeded the danger of homelessness, loss of job, and school time loss for children. Safe, rapid, permanent, accommodating housing is the only solution to survivors leaving their abuser, and Sojourner House is the only organization in Rhode Island creating affordable housing for victims.

United Way of Rhode Island has seen Sojourner House rise to the challenge of the new shelter coordination system. As a RAP (Regional Access Point), Sojourner House ensures DV victims across the state can access services. Sojourner House delivers rapid rehousing, shelter beds, rental assistance, and housing literacy to clients, and the wraparound services surround the family with the kind of care that can interrupt the cycle of violence and housing instability. Investing in Sojourner House's permanent housing development program is critical to the functioning of a key pillar of Rhode Island's housing and homelessness infrastructure.

United Way of Rhode Island respectfully urges your support for Senate Bill 2848 and thanks you for sharing our commitment to survivors of domestic violence.

Sincerely,
Peggy Afonso, Program Officer, Housing and Economic Policy
United Way Rhode Island