

To: Senator Jacob Bissaillon, Chair, and members of the Senate Housing and Municipal Government Committee

Re: Support for S-2264 Warming and Cooling Centers

From: Bernie Beaudreau, community volunteer, Rumford, RI
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Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S-2264 for severe weather warming and cooling services and plans. This legislation will provide needed augmentation and supplemental services to the current seasonal shelter services for the growing number of homeless Rhode Islanders, administered by the Executive Office of Housing and implemented by the current statewide network shelter providers.

Engaging the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency and its network of municipal emergency management directors will augment the current shelter system during periods of life-threatening weather emergencies. *It will provide additional coordination and supplementation of needed services that has been missing with previous weather emergencies.*

During these weather emergency periods, additional warming/cooling facilities (beyond the capacities of the existing year-round shelters) need to be set up for sleeping and feeding with sanitary facilities and volunteer support in a safe and clean environment. Emergency response to weather emergencies is most effective with help of EMA professionals to recruit and coordinate community service agencies and volunteers to help with the set-up and operation of the shelters, including organizing and providing transportation of homeless individuals to and from the shelters.

With full support for S-2264, I would like to make two additional suggestions:

1. Add language to S-2264 for the Director of RIEMA to work with the Secretary of the EOH to create a coordinated services and funding plan to augment the current and projected shelter system.
2. EOH should request supplemental funding for FY27 for expanded sheltering services during winter weather emergencies.

The experience of most of this past winter’s shelters was that there were not enough shelter beds to meet the total need. On many nights, shelters and warming centers were over capacity. Therefore, plans for next winter should address the greater need.

With the experience of this winter’s sheltering emergencies, EOH and RIEMA should be able to project the amount and uses of supplemental funds for implementing this Warming/Cooling plan. The information below is presented to support the projection for the additional funding needed for next winter to be included in the FY27 budget.

The daily low temperature record was collected for Providence from November 1, 2025 through March 24, 2026 and added to last year’s March 25, 2025 through April 15, 2025 temperature data to approximate the total number of shelter days for which this legislation would apply. The table below shows that a total of 137 out of 166 days (83%) would require the implementation of emergency shelters.

Projection of # of days with low temps at or below 36F based on actual 11/1/25 through 3/24/26 PLUS actual 3/23/25 through 4/15/25				
Actual/ Projection	Total days	average low temp	days at or below 36 F	% at or below 36 F
Actual	143	25.7	128	90%
Projection	166	27.1	137	83%

Estimating the amount of additional state funding needed to implement this legislation could be based on the following table which was generated by analyzing EOH’s winter shelter grants that have been announced for FY26 to date.

The table below shows that nearly \$2 million has been spent this fiscal year to respond to the winter’s weather-related sheltering emergencies. Each emergency shelter day cost about \$15,000 and the average funding for each of the eleven (11) shelter providers was \$180,000.

EOH grants in FY26 for Winter Shelters			
	10/30/2025	2/18/2026	Total
# of grants	11	3	14
Total \$	1,747,867	233,350	1,981,217
Proj FY26 days with lows at or below 36F			137
EOH grant dollars per shelter day			\$ 14,461
EOH \$ for each of 11 winter shelter providers			\$ 180,111

RI EOH Grants FY2026 YTD 3/22/2026

GRANTEE/Project	August 7, 2025 Annual Grants	Oct. 30, 2025 Seasonal Shelter & Flexible Winter Response Grants	Feb. 18, 2026 Supp. Winter Grants	Agency Total \$	Agency Total %
Amos House				4,801,666	20.6%
Essential Services	400,000				
Fam & Older Adult Shelter	3,750,000				
Harrington Hall Meal Service	301,666				
OFS	350,000				
Better Lives RI				598,000	2.6%
Pete & Andy's	78,000				
Street Outreach & Drop-in	520,000				
Blackstone Valley Advocacy Center				488,967	2.1%
DV Emergency Shelter	488,967				
Catholic Social Services				700,000	3.0%
Emmanuel House	700,000				
Child and Family				134,265	0.6%
Supportive Housing	134,265				
Community Care Alliance				1,215,332	5.2%
Dignity Bus	180,000				
CCA Housing Problem Solving	100,000				
CCA Street Outreach/Access Point	246,154				
Woonsocket Family Shelter	285,000				
Crossroads RI				5,614,801	24.0%
Domestic Violence Shelter	245,000				
Family Shelter	475,000				
Harrington Hall	900,000				
Hartford Ave	520,000				
HPS, Mobile Diversion, Regional Access Point, & Day Services	1,200,000				
Rapid Rehousing	1,650,000				
Women's Shelter	525,000				
Domestic Violence Resource Center				55,000	0.2%
Emergency Shelter	55,000				
Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center				198,000	0.8%
Permanent Supportive Housing	110,000				
Phase II Shelter	78,000				
Safe Shelter	10,000				
Family Services of RI				375,000	1.6%
Housing Stabilization	375,000				
Foster Forward				211,723	0.9%
Rapid Rehousing	153,600				
Supportive Services	58,123				
Haus of Codec				130,000	0.6%
Emergency Shelter	130,000				
House of Hope				985,000	4.2%
ECHO Village	585,000				
Enhanced Street Outreach	400,000				

Lucy's Hearth				824,592	3.5%
Emergency Shelter	824,592				
McCauley Ministries				55,270	0.2%
Case Management & Transportation	55,270				
Newport Mental Health				210,233	0.9%
Newport Street Outreach & Regional Access Point	210,233				
Open Doors				1,998,971	8.6%
Pawtucket Regional Access Point	113,150				
Pawtucket Shelter (1139)	1,421,614				
Providence Shelter (Plainfield Men's)	297,000				
Pawtucket Housing Authority				250,000	1.1%
Rapid Rehousing	250,000				
RI Coalition to End Homelessness				478,602	2.0%
Constituent Services	58,602				
HMIS	420,000				
Sojourner House				667,307	2.9%
DV Regional Access Point	150,000				
Rapid Rehousing	215,000				
Safe House for Victims of Abuse #1	98,972				
Safe House for Victims of Abuse #2	203,335				
RI Legal Services				400,000	1.7%
Homeless Prevention & Diversion	400,000				
Thrive				270,000	1.2%
Housing Problem Solving	120,000				
Street Outreach	150,000				
Turning Around Ministries				50,000	0.2%
Day Center	50,000				
Washington Square Services Corp.				145,000	0.6%
McKinney Shelter	145,000				
WARM				1,488,255	6.4%
Emergency Shelter	700,000				
Rapid Rehousing	180,000				
Street Outreach & Regional Access	300,000				
Winter Emergency Pop-Up Sites					
RI State Council of Churches		200,000	150,000	350,000	1.5%
Town of West Warwick		99,547	40,000	139,547	0.6%
MAE Organization		77,500		77,500	0.3%
Crossroads RI		99,801			
Seasonal Shelter Grants Nov-Apr					
Community Care Alliance		404,178			
Harvest Sanctuary		114,022		114,022	0.5%
Hope in Jesus Ministry		100,000		100,000	0.4%
Multi-Center for All		100,000		100,000	0.4%
Open Doors		167,207			
WARM		264,905	43,350		
Youth Pride		120,707		120,707	0.5%
TOTAL	21,366,543	1,747,867	233,350	23,347,760	100.0%
Regional Access Points - RAPs	2,399,537				
	10.3%				
TOTAL GRANTS	51	11	3	65	