

Aimee Cardwell
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Newport, RI 02840

April 7, 2026

Dear Representative / Senator,

I write to express my strong support for H8334, the Rhode Island Voting Rights Act, and to urge you to advance this legislation.

The right to vote is the cornerstone of democratic self-governance. When that right is diluted, suppressed, or made inaccessible to any segment of our citizenry, the legitimacy of every election outcome is diminished. H8334 addresses this directly by establishing clear, enforceable prohibitions on election policies and practices that produce discriminatory outcomes, whether or not discriminatory intent can be proven. That standard is both principled and practical: harm to voters is harm to democracy, regardless of its origin.

Rhode Island is a state of remarkable linguistic and cultural diversity. The bill's mandate that jurisdictions exceeding defined demographic thresholds provide multilingual ballots, translated registration materials, and trained bilingual poll workers is not a concession to complexity — it is a fulfillment of the promise that every eligible citizen has a meaningful opportunity to participate. A vote cast without comprehension of the ballot is not a free vote.

The judicial preapproval mechanism for jurisdictions with demonstrated histories of violations is measured and proportionate. It does not impose permanent federal-style oversight on every municipality; it reserves heightened scrutiny for those that have already established a pattern warranting it. That is sound governance.

Finally, the bill's treatment of provisional ballots cast in the wrong precinct — counting them for statewide and federal offices where the voter is otherwise eligible — closes a gap that has disenfranchised voters through no fault of their own. Correcting an administrative error at the cost of a voter's voice is not election integrity; it is its opposite.

I urge you to vote in favor of H8334. Protecting the franchise for every Rhode Islander is among the most consequential acts this legislature can take.

Respectfully,



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