
FW: S3143 - Support

From SLegislation <slegislation@rilegislature.gov>

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To Senate Judiciary Committee <SenateJudiciary@rilegislature.onmicrosoft.com>

From: Kristen Lancaster <klancaster1112@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2026 12:00 PM

To: Sen. LaMountain, Matthew L. <sen-lamountain@rilegislature.gov>; SLegislation <slegislation@rilegislature.gov>

Subject: S3143 - Support

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Dear Chairman LaMountain,

My name is Kristen Lancaster and I am a resident of Cranston. I am writing to express my strong support of S3143.

I am in support of S3143, the Rhode Island Voting Rights Act (RIVRA), because the Trump Administration has signaled in numerous ways that they want to make it more difficult for people to vote. Project 2025 warned us that the introduction of the SAVE Act was coming and it did. As a divorced woman who chose to keep my former spouse's name, under the SAVE Act, I would have to verify my name since it does not match my birth certificate. As an Army Veteran and former employee of the Social Security Administration, I know how difficult it can be for people to attain documents.

The Trump Administration has purposefully been attacking our federal agencies from the inside out by creating barriers for employees to complete their mission in serving the public, as well as, introducing untested and unvetted AI into them. Policies are also being updated through Executive Order bypassing Congress. The Trump Administration is working towards authoritarianism rather than working within the democratic institution on which the Constitution was created. We should all be very alarmed by the ongoing actions within our federal systems. It is why I retired 6 years early from federal service to become a full-time activist. We need to protect Rhode Islanders from this blatant threat on our rights.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments are our most successful pieces of civil rights legislation and the very things that we need to protect. Over time the VRA has been weakened by federal court rulings, and enforcement by a Department of Justice that has displayed its allegiance to the Trump Administration over the people of which an Oath is taken to protect. With S3143, Rhode Islanders will be ensured that there would be a cause of action to challenge election practices that deny or abridge the voting strength or access of voters of color based on protected class status and it would be illegal for governments to prevent minorities from exercising their right to vote.

Currently, Rhode Island has no requirements in state law for providing language access in elections. The RIVRA includes protections to ensure language access for “qualified language minorities.”

By putting existing federal protections into state law through S3143, regardless of what is going on in DC, the right to vote in Rhode Island will be protected.

I hope the Senate Judiciary Committee will pass S3143 in order to protect the right to vote.

In Gratitude,
Kristen Lancaster
Cranston, RI