

RE: S-3143 - Rhode Island Voting Rights Act - SUPPORT

Hearing: April 7, 2026, Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Matthew LaMountain, Chair, and Esteemed Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

I write you in strong support of the Rhode Island Voting Rights Act, S-3143.

Voting is at the core of our democracy. It is guaranteed by the American Constitution, but those guarantees have been circumvented often over the years to prevent citizens from asserting their rights. Those rights were more clearly articulated in 1965 with the passage of the federal Voting Rights Act. Since then some states have continued to make access to voting for certain individuals and groups of people harder. Most blatantly and aggressively the current President of the United States from his bully pulpit is attempting to restrict voting rights by demanding that his party pass the SAVE Act or he would not pass other legislation. He publicly proclaimed that passing the act would help his party stay in power for years. Such bold and unethical efforts to attempt to reduce citizens' voting rights are unacceptable. (The Safeguard the American Voter Eligibility Act does just the opposite. It would make it much harder for millions of voters to cast their votes.)

The Rhode Island Voting Rights Act would further build protections at the state level for voters by eliminating barriers to vote such as providing protections against discrimination as defined in the bill, language assistance to those with limited English language proficiency, providing strong protections against intimidation and deception at the ballot box.

The RI Voting Rights Act will make our government more responsive to the voters' access to those rights, and help counter the forces attempting to take away those rights.

I respectfully urge you to pass this additional guardrail to our democracy and send it to the full Senate for a vote this year.

Mary Chace
Riverside, RI