



The RI FREEDOM Collective

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL S3143 - AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS - RHODE ISLAND VOTING RIGHTS ACT

April 7, 2026

Dear Chairperson LaMountain and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the RI Freedom Collective we respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of the Rhode Island Voting Rights Act. This legislation is essential to ensuring that every Rhode Islander- regardless of race, language, disability, or background- can participate fully and freely in our democratic process without facing discrimination or unequal barriers.

Voting is the foundation of representative government. Yet we know that discriminatory practices do not always appear as overt bans or explicit exclusions. They often take the form of subtle but deeply harmful obstacles: inaccessible polling locations, reduced voting hours in certain communities, inadequate language assistance, or administrative decisions that disproportionately burden voters of color, voters with disabilities, and voters for whom English is not their primary language. These inequities undermine public trust and weaken the legitimacy of our elections.

The Rhode Island Voting Rights Act provides the tools our state needs to prevent discrimination before it occurs. By establishing clear standards, transparency requirements, and a fair process for addressing potential violations, this bill strengthens- not burdens- our election system.

Importantly, this legislation does not favor any political party or demographic group. It simply ensures that every eligible voter has an equal opportunity to cast a ballot and have it counted.

By passing the RI Voting Rights Act, the General Assembly can affirm that discrimination - whether intentional or not - has no place in our elections, and that our state is committed to a democracy that is inclusive, transparent and fair.

We respectfully urge you to support this legislation and to uphold the fundamental right that makes all other rights possible.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to protecting the voices of Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,

The Rhode Island Freedom Collective

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