

April 5, 2026

Senate Committee on Judiciary  
State of Rhode Island  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: In Support of Senate Bill S3143

Dear Chair LaMountain and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Shannon Massaroco, and I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of Senate Bill S3143, the Rhode Island Voting Rights Act.

Both personally and professionally, I have seen how systems, when not intentionally designed for equity, create barriers that shape outcomes. Growing up, I experienced that firsthand. I continue to see how policy decisions determine who has access, who is heard, and who is left out.

Rhode Island is a vibrant, culturally diverse state. That diversity drives our economy and strengthens our communities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly one in three Rhode Islanders identifies as a person of color, and more than 20% of residents speak a language other than English at home (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/RI>).

Yet when it comes to voting, we reduce those same communities to percentages and thresholds, deciding whose access is “enough” and whose voice can wait. We rely on formulas to determine when language access is required. We debate disparities. We measure participation gaps, but too often fail to act.

S3143 changes that. Importantly, it helps bridge the information gap for voters with limited English proficiency by requiring translated materials and meaningful access to voting information. From a legal and systems standpoint, this bill provides the clarity and accountability needed to ensure the right to vote is protected in practice.

If Rhode Island truly values its diversity, our democratic systems must reflect that.

We cannot celebrate diversity in our economy while limiting it in our democracy.

I respectfully urge your support of S3143. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Shannon Massaroco*  
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