



Testimony of Matthew Netto, AARP Rhode Island
In support of Senate Bill 2638
Senate Artificial Intelligence & Emerging Technology Committee
March 31st, 2026

Chairwomen Gu and members of the Senate Artificial Intelligence & Emerging Technology Committee,

AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization with 38 million members nationwide and nearly 125,000 members here in Rhode Island. We advocate on behalf of issues that impact older adults, and we appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for Chairwoman Gu's Senate Bill 2638.

Senate Bill 2638 is legislation that updates and strengthens Rhode Island's Identity Theft Protection Act of 2015. Older adults are frequent targets of identity theft and financial fraud, and once personal or financial information is compromised, recovery can be extremely difficult, particularly for older adults living on fixed incomes, or those with limited access to digital tools and technical support.

S2638 modernizes Rhode Island law by requiring risk-based information security programs aligned with current, industry-recognized cybersecurity frameworks, expanding and clarifying definitions of personally identifiable information, improving data minimization, retention, and secure destruction requirements, strengthening breach notification timelines for state and municipal agencies, and ensuring accountability when third-party vendors handle personal data. Together, these updates reflect the reality that cybersecurity threats have grown far more sophisticated since the original law was enacted, and that outdated protections leave consumers, especially older adults, at heightened risk.

These updates are both timely and necessary. Cybersecurity threats have grown significantly more sophisticated since the original law was enacted, and outdated safeguards leave consumers vulnerable. Rhode Island residents should be able to trust that when their personal information is collected—whether by government agencies or private entities—it will be handled responsibly and protected with appropriate safeguards.

S2638 strengthens Rhode Island's commitment to protecting residents' personal information in an increasingly digital and interconnected world. For older adults—who are disproportionately targeted by identity theft and often face greater barriers to recovery, these protections are essential. This legislation reflects a forward-looking, balanced approach that promotes strong consumer protection while allowing reasonable flexibility for implementation.



AARP Rhode Island supports S2638 because these safeguards are essential to protecting older adults, who are disproportionately targeted by fraud, by closing security gaps, holding agencies and third-party vendors accountable, and better safeguarding sensitive personal information in an increasingly digital world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt R. Netto".

Matthew Netto
Associate State Director-AARP Rhode Island