

April 3, 2025

The Honorable Jacob Bissaillon
Chair, Senate Committee on Housing and Municipal Government
Rhode Island State House, Providence RI 02903

Re: SUPPORT for S-274 – *An Act Relating to Property – Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (Immigration Status)*

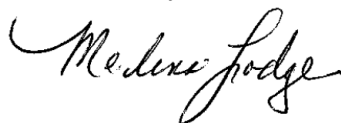
Dear Chair Bissaillon and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Housing Network of Rhode Island, our 18 member agencies and the low-income Rhode Islanders we seek to serve, I write in support of S-274, legislation that would prohibit a landlord from inquiring about the immigration or citizenship status of a tenant, prospective tenant, or occupant of a residential rental property, subject to federal laws or regulations.

We believe Rhode Island can and should be a state where all residents are able to live in safe, healthy, and affordable homes in thriving communities. It is important that residents searching for a place to live not face additional barriers in the process, and should not be subjected to fear, discrimination, or intimidation by landlords based on their immigration or citizenship status. Unfortunately, due to actions and rhetoric perpetrated by the current Presidential Administration, we have seen increasing hostility and outright vitriol to our immigrant neighbors right here in Rhode Island, despite our state's foundation as a welcoming place for all. This addition to landlord-tenant law is timely and while it will have minimal impact on landlords, it will have a significant impact for existing tenants and individuals and families seeking rental housing.

Thank you to the bill sponsors for advancing this important protection for Rhode Islanders and to the Committee for considering this legislation. We strongly urge the Committee to recommend this legislation for passage. I'm happy to answer any questions, please feel free to contact me at (401) 721-5680 ext. 104 or mlodge@housingnetworkri.org.

Respectfully submitted,



Melina Lodge, Executive Director