



RHODE ISLAND COALITION  
OF HOUSING PROVIDERS

[www.ricohp.org](http://www.ricohp.org)

March 25, 2024

To Honorable Representative Robert E. Craven, Sr.  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903  
VIA Email: [HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)

**RE: Letter in OPPOSITION to House Bill No. 7647**

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Rhode Island Coalition of Housing Providers (“the coalition”) in opposition to House Bill 7647 as currently written. If passed, this bill would a.) ban a landlord from charging any convenience fee to a tenant’s rental payment and b.) require that any advertisement for tenancy contain disclaimers with all required fees and rental terms. While we appreciate the intent behind this bill, we believe that it overlooks crucial considerations and could have detrimental effects on both landlords and tenants.

One of our primary concerns with this bill is the prohibition on landlords charging convenience fees. As written, this prohibition would prevent any fees for any forms of payment, even those that a tenant may voluntarily chose to utilize, such as paying their rent online or by using a credit card. By mandating that landlords absorb these fees, the law effectively removes tenants' ability to choose a payment method that best suits their needs. Many tenants prefer the convenience of online or credit card payments, even if they entail a small fee, and this bill would unjustly restrict their freedom to make such choices.

Additionally, the requirement for landlords to provide detailed information regarding any and all fees and detailed lease information in rental advertisements, poses significant challenges, particularly for small mom-and-pop landlords. The burden of complying with these disclosure requirements could place undue financial strain on small landlords, who may lack the resources and expertise to navigate complex advertising regulations. Furthermore, the threat of substantial fines for non-compliance adds an additional layer of hardship for these landlords, who are already struggling to maintain affordable rental properties in competitive markets.

While we recognize that transparency in rental transactions is important, it may be more practical to require written disclosures *prior* to the signing of any lease rather than attempting to include all information in rental advertisements. This approach would ensure that tenants have access to essential information about fees and charges *before committing to a lease*, without imposing unreasonable burdens on landlords or risking misleading or incomplete advertisements.

As such, we urge you to reconsider the provisions of this bill as written and work towards crafting legislation that addresses the concerns of both landlords and tenants in a more balanced and practical manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important legislation.

Respectfully,

RI Coalition of Housing Providers