

Roberta DiMezza

From: Greg Gerritt <gerritt@mindspring.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2024 2:46 PM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Testimony on H 7967

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Members of the RI House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to support H 7967 which will update the Homeless Bill of Rights. Since the Homeless Bill of Rights was passed the situation in Rhode island, and across the country, has become much worse. Housing is vastly more expensive and much harder to find. Each year more and more people find themselves unsheltered as RI does not build enough housing and the efforts to help unhoused people are underfunded and inadequate. In such as crisis the most vulnerable and marginalized among us deserve the utmost care and respect. But this is not what they receive. We tell those with nowhere to go that they cannot even seek refuge in the areas at the edge of our communities, despite the long history of people doing exactly that . We bulldoze camps and toss belongings in the trash, the belongings of the people who have the least belongings of anyone in our communities. Police are overly suspicious and inquisitive simple because people are unhoused. Mayors campaign on getting rid of them. Lets be real, if they had any real options, if RI had a way to house everyone adequately, We would not have encampments in our cities, huge numbers of people sleeping where ever they can. And we would not consistently be violating their rights as human beings and members of our community. Bill H 7967 starts the process by which we reintegrate the unhoused into our communities and begin to treat them as the members they are. Please pass this bill.

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