

Chairperson and Members of the House
Judiciary Committee.

I am writing in support of House Bill
5299, introduced by Representative
Joseph M. McNamara, which directs Rhode
Island Housing to work with the
infrastructure Bank and other appropriate
public and private entities to assist
homeowners' associations in the
purchase of leased land under the
right of first refusal.

Many Rhode Island residents, particularly
in communities with long-standing lease
agreements, face the risk of displacement
when leased land is sold to outside
corporate entities. Despite having the right
of first refusal, homeowners' associations -
made up of community volunteers with
limited resource and expertise and no
staff - often struggle to navigate the
legal and financial barriers that
make it difficult to secure ownership
of the leased land provided for in this
chapter H 5299 directly. addresses this
issue by directing Rhode Island Housing,

the Infrastructure Bank and other appropriate public and private entities to investigate and remove obstacles that prevent homeowners from exercising their right of first refusal.

By passing this bill, the General Assembly will ensure that homeowners in communities like ours can remain in their homes, protect affordable housing, assist aging population to age in place, retain the character of our communities, and prevent the uncertainty and financial hardship that often accompany land sales to outside investors. Homeownership should provide stability, not uncertainty. This legislation aligns with Rhode Island's broader efforts to promote housing security and sustainable homeownership.

I urge the committee to support H 299 and take this meaningful step to protect homeowners and their communities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Cimino

Resident on House Card

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