



# Rhode Island State Council of Churches and the Rhode Island Bible Society

Mr. Jeremy M. Langill  
*Executive Minister*

## Officers of the Governing Board

Rev. Venson Jordan  
*President*  
Rev. Heather Bailes Baker  
*Vice President*  
Rev. Charles B. Ortman  
*Acting Treasurer*  
Ms. Christina Wynveen  
*Recording Secretary*  
Mr. Randy Yorston  
*Media Secretary*  
Rev. Eugene Dyszlewski  
*Lead Social Justice Commissioner*

## Governing Board Members

Ms. Lee Cowan  
Dr. Laura Gabiger  
Rev. Betsy Aldrich Garland  
Mr. Geoffrey Greene  
Rev. Dr. Patty Kogut  
Roberto Rodriguez, Esq.  
Rev. Dr. G. Russell Miller  
Rev. Lauri Smalls

**March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

The Honorable Robert E. Craven  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903

**re: support of H5436, H5651, 5652**

Dear Chairman Craven and Committee Members:

The spiritual call to love is a call to non-violence. It is the recognition that not only are we co-creators with the Divine, but that we are deeply and intimately connected to one another.

Early Christian reflection on violence provided a clear alternative to the dominating power of the Roman State. Jesus instructed his followers to pray for their enemies, to include those who had been cast aside, and to recognize our responsibility to respond to fear with love.

We are inextricably bound together in a common humanity, and in our daily work to live lives of faith, we recognize the essential need to advocate for laws that are just and that also disrupt cycles of violence.

Banning assault style weapons and implementing common sense restrictions for individuals who have a history of violence speaks to our moral, spiritual, and civic responsibility to care for one another.

The Rhode Island State Council of Churches, along with our partners noted below, urges passage of H5436, H5651, and 5652.

Jeremy Langill  
Executive Minister  
**Rhode Island State Council of Churches**

Rev. Darrell Goodwin  
Executive Conference Minister  
**Southern New England Conference, UCC**

Bishop Nathan Piphio  
**New England Synod, ELCA**

Angela McParland  
**Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team**

Evin Carvill-Ziemer  
Regional Lead, New England  
**Unitarian Universalist Association**

Rebecca Leuchak  
Presiding Clerk  
**New England Yearly Meeting of Friends**

Rev. Dr. Shanna R. Vance-Ocampo  
General Presbyter  
**Presbytery of Southern New England**

Rev. Effie E. McAvoy  
Co-Chair  
**Rhode Island United Methodists in Action**