

Steven Sepe

From: Mary Pendergast <marypen211@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 9, 2024 6:39 PM
To: House State Government and Elections Committee
Subject: in Favor of HB 7760, 7761 and 7762

Sisters of Mercy
99 Fillmore St
Pawtucket, RI, 02860

Dear Friends,

I am Mary Pendergast from the Sisters of Mercy and the Poor People's Campaign and I write in favor of HB 7760, 7761 and 7762 in support of the Narragansett Indian Tribe who has inhabited the area along Narragansett Bay for some 30,000 years. Today the Narragansett Tribe is the only federally recognized tribe in Rhode Island. These Bills seek to exempt Narragansett Indian Tribe homeowners from real estate taxes, remove any tax liens imposed by the state or any municipality, and stipulate that a Narragansett tribal member-owned home shall be owned in perpetuity until sold by the Narragansett tribal owners.

According to WorldPopulationReview.com, the race most likely to be in poverty in Rhode Island is Native, with 26.01% living below the poverty level. An article in Providence Business News written before the pandemic hit was titled, "For RI's Indigenous People, Good Jobs and Prosperity are often Out of Reach." According to a Narragansett tribal elder, many sick and elderly members are on the verge of losing their homes.

As a member of a religious community of women, I have enjoyed tax-exempt status in Rhode Island. I ask you to consider the few tribal members who would benefit from these bills. Perhaps in some small way, it could be the beginning of reparations to our Native People. I appreciate your consideration of the People of the Point, the Narragansett Indian Tribe.

Sincerely,
Mary Pendergast,RSM