Date:

**TO:** The Honorable Marvin Abney
 Chair, House Finance Committee

 Members, House Finance Committee

**STATEMENT OF \_(your name)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_IN SUPPORT OF H7127**

I am pleased to support and urge you to recommend passage of H7127 to modernize our state Property Tax Relief law. Rep. Ruggiero and the bill co-sponsors recognize that updating and expanding the state Property Tax Relief Law is one way to address the housing affordability crisis in our state. Affordable and accessible housing options are essential for older persons to live safely at home where the vast majority prefer to remain.

Housing costs continue to rise dramatically and are a financial burden for lower income seniors on fixed incomes and persons on Social Security due to disability. The Covid-19 pandemic and rising inflation for basic goods has increased these financial challenges. One-third of seniors living in their own homes are housing cost-burdened, paying 30% or more on housing costs and half of older renters are housing cost-burdened. Rhode Island’s high property taxes contribute to their housing cost burden.

The state Property Tax Relief law was enacted to bring relief to low-income older adults and persons with disabilities who rent or own their home. It currently provides a state tax credit (or refund), for persons with incomes up to $30,000 and the credit (or refund) is capped at $415 for 2021

This bill updates the law to increase the maximum credit to $850 and raises the income cap -last raised in 1999- to $50,000. These changes would provide relief to help offset our financially burdensome property taxes on lower-income seniors and persons with disabilities and make the law more in line with Massachusetts (caps credit at $1,170) and other New England states.
For example, an older homeowner with household income of $34,000 and property taxes of $4,000 is currently not eligible for a credit or refund. Under this bill, the same homeowner would be eligible for an $850 credit or refund.

Thank you for your consideration.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_