



March 6th, 2023

Dear House Judiciary Committee:

I am a Rhode Island voter and a representative from COYOTE RI writing to you today in strong support of H5110 - [THE Rhode Island FIRST STEP ACT](#)

This bill is packed with a lot of good things to improve the plight of incarcerated people and reduce recidivism rates.

Many people who are incarcerated for longer sentences at the ACI are elderly people with numerous medical conditions and are not a danger or risk to the public. Many others are incarcerated for petty non violent misdemeanors and are parents of children who have been placed with DCYF and they are not a danger or risk to the public.

Fiscal responsibility:

75% of the women at the RI ACI are for misdemeanors. The annual cost to house someone at the ACI in 2021 was, 186, 230 a year and in 2020 it was 133k. In 2022 the ACI racked up more than [\\$23 million in overtime](#). That's on pace to top \$30 million for the third year in a row.

It's common sense that it's time to redirect some of this funding to pay for housing, childcare and other vital services for poor people, and help them gain stability. For 186k a year, we could pay a family's rent, childcare, car payment, college tuition, medical insurance, and give them a monthly allowance and we would still have change left over, and

maybe in 2 to 4 years this person would be a self-sufficient, productive tax paying member or our community.

COYOTE RI launched a RI ACI Re-entry program in 2022, we are providing the women being released with case management to get their birth certificates and social security cards so they can get a state ID, and are able to apply for jobs and public services. We also provide the women with gift cards to SAVERS & Stop & Shop, so they can purchase clothing, food and household items. So far we have provided case management and services to over 40 women who have been released from the RI ACI, as our goal is to better understand why they are being arrested, and how we can disrupt the incarceration of women in RI, by providing the women the resources they did not have that led to their incarceration.

Please be part of the solution and vote YES on H5110

Thank you for your time and consideration

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COYOTE RI Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics, Rhode Island (COYOTE RI) is a group of current and former sex workers and sex trafficking survivors working on "policy" for improved health and safety for people in Rhode Island's sex industry. Learn more at www.coyoteri.org