



Senator Jessica de la Cruz

Senate Minority Leader
Ex-Officio Member of all Senate Committees

Member, Senate Committee on Labor
Member, Senate Committee on Rules, Government Ethics & Oversight

Jessica de la Cruz is the daughter of Portuguese immigrants. Her father was born in Pico, Azores, and her mother in Funchal, Madeira. She is the Minority Leader of the Rhode Island Senate. A Republican representing District 23 (Burrillville, Glocester, North Smithfield), she was first elected to the Senate in November 2018 and was elected Senate Minority Leader in July 2022. She previously served as Senate Minority Whip from 2020-2022.

As Minority Leader, Senator de la Cruz serves as an ex-officio member of all standing Senate committees and is a member of the Senate Committee on Labor and the Senate Committee on Rules, Government Ethics & Oversight. She previously served as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

During her time in the legislature, Senator de la Cruz has been a leading voice on issues surrounding Eleanor Slater Hospital, specifically the Zambarano Unit in Burrillville, and secured over \$100 million in funding to rebuild and revitalize Zambarano Hospital. She has been an advocate for the hospital's patients, who are among the state's most vulnerable residents and have nowhere else to turn.

Senator de la Cruz sponsored and passed into law Senate Bill S-2219, which closed a major loophole in RI state law that allowed those in positions of authority to engage in sexual relations with children as young as 14-years-old.

Senator de la Cruz was the lead sponsor of a law requiring the state's Attorney General to report the total number of cases in Rhode Island's courts that involve firearms-related charges.

Senator de la Cruz has been a leading voice among those advocating to end the Disaster Declaration (State of Emergency) that extended executive powers over the last two years. She persistently urged the General Assembly to fully resume its lawmaking powers and its constitutional function as a check on the Executive Branch.

In 2021, Senator de la Cruz was chosen to deliver the Republican response to the Governor's State of the State address. In it, she advocated for school choice, returning Rhode Island to constitutional norms, providing aid to small businesses, and prioritizing Rhode Island's infrastructure needs.

Through a bipartisan effort, she advocated with federal and state leaders for the overdue Route 146 infrastructure projects. She also worked to move up Route 94 in priority, with work completed in 2022.

The National Foundation for Women Legislators selected Senator de la Cruz in 2021 to receive an Elected Women of Excellence Award, which was created to identify elected women who have worked tirelessly, often breaking down barriers and overcoming obstacles that once seemed insurmountable, to serve their communities. These pacesetters have engendered an environment where women can now serve in public office and fight for the issues they are passionate about.

In 2022, House Republican Conference Chairwoman Elise Stefanik's super PAC named Senator de la Cruz to its "Women to Watch" list.

In 2023, Leader de la Cruz was again chosen to deliver the Republican response to the Governor's State of the State address. She called for bold action on housing, the economy, and our failing education system. She also called for lowering the state sales tax from 7% to 5%, kickstarting the conversation to bring real relief to Rhode Island taxpayers.

Leader de la Cruz has worked tirelessly against wasteful spending and regressive policies and to ensure that our state government is more accountable, more accessible, and more responsive to the taxpayers and residents of our state.