



Submitted via Email

4 March 2025

The Honorable Representative Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chair, House Corporations Committee
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H. 5810 - JOINT RESOLUTION CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY BLOCKCHAIN AND CRYPTOCURRENCY

Dear Chair Solomon and Members of the Committee,

The Rhode Island Blockchain Council is pleased to offer this written testimony in support of House Bill 5810, "JOINT RESOLUTION CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY BLOCKCHAIN AND CRYPTOCURRENCY".

As Rhode Island moves forward as an entity composed of private individuals, incorporated entities and the public agencies designed to guide and support them, it is imperative that we, together, understand fully and if advantageous utilize the tools and solutions our increasingly more digitized society has to offer.

Blockchain technology is potentially one of the most game changing tools to emerge in decades.

Whether supporting the ability for individuals to carry credentials that are virtually immune to forgery or allowing businesses to verify document validity with 100% accuracy without requiring cumbersome physical notation, the potential to protect citizen privacy or increase business productivity could be limitless.

A blockchain is essentially a transparent, 100 percent immutable, publicly available ledger that validates any form of data as authentic without necessarily disclosing that data. Imagine carrying a copy of your complete health care history with you, having a new doctor or care provider able to trust that the data is 100% authentic, but *before* you allow them to view it. Similarly financial, legal or real estate proof of ownership records could be so carried.

Imagine the DMV able to issue paperless motor vehicle titles that can't be forged, faked or more importantly lost, instantly and for pennies. Public agencies, and therefor ultimately the public, would also benefit enormously in the areas of land records, court archives or vital records such as birth, death and marriage certificates.

Finally, while blockchain is the basis of, it is certainly *not* synonymous with cryptocurrency, yet the potential benefit the Rhode Island there cannot be ignored.

As a state Rhode Island is limited in acreage and the classic natural resources, but historically blessed in the areas of productivity and innovation. Over the previous two years, New York, a determinedly crypto-unfriendly state, assessed almost \$760M in non-tax, non-penal, cryptocurrency business fees based on an increasingly vague regulatory framework, and businesses happily paid. Since cryptocurrency is geographically decentralized and essentially decoupled from the classic trading venues of Wall Street, there is no reason that Rhode Island's unique



strengths could not and should not be attracting business to operate here and bring that economic and financial benefit. Businesses do not flourish in chaos and in fact are attracted to predictable and stable regulatory environments with predictable fees and operating costs, something Rhode Island can certainly provide.

Now, while these potential benefits are simply the tip of the proverbial iceberg, as with any emerging technology nothing should be done without judicious review and careful consideration. It is only after the General Assembly has all the facts that decisions can be made on the future of these technologies in Rhode Island, whether by adoption or regulation. Thus, the creation of a commission to study the relevant issues, benefits and pitfalls alike, is not just prudent but necessary.

Therefore, on behalf of the Rhode Island Blockchain Council, I respectfully request that the Committee recommend for passage H. 5810 for the purpose of creating a commission to study the potential benefits of blockchain and cryptocurrency.

Sincerely,

THE RHODE ISLAND BLOCKCHAIN COUNCIL

Vincent J. Bono

Vice Chair

Director

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CC. Honorable Members of the House Corporations Committee

Representative Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.

Representative William W. O'Brien

Representative Justine A. Caldwell

Representative Stephen M. Casey

Representative Anthony J. DeSimone

Representative Alex S. Finkelman

Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy

Representative Brian C. Newberry

Representative Christopher G. Paplauskas

Representative Robert D. Phillips

Representative Brandon C. Potter

Representative Enrique Sanchez

Representative Patricia A. Serpa

Representative Tina L. Spears

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