

April 7, 2026

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

RE: HOUSE BILL 7331 – AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Chair Solomon and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, representing all 39 municipalities across the state, we offer the following testimony regarding this legislation related to data center development and electric cost allocation.

The League appreciates the intent of this proposal, particularly the provision ensuring that the costs associated with the planning, construction, and operation of electric infrastructure needed to serve large-scale data centers are borne by those facilities rather than shifted onto residential customers and local businesses. Protecting ratepayers from increased electric costs is an important policy objective and one that aligns with the interests of municipalities and the communities we serve.

At the same time, cities and towns are often the first to experience the real-world impacts of large-scale development. While this legislation addresses electric cost allocation, it does not fully account for the range of potential municipal considerations associated with data centers. These may include impacts on local infrastructure, water usage, land use compatibility, and the capacity of municipal services.

In particular, public safety is an important factor. Facilities of this scale can present unique operational characteristics that may require additional training, equipment, and coordination for local fire, police, and emergency medical services. Ensuring that municipalities are prepared to respond effectively, without creating additional financial burdens on local taxpayers, is an important consideration as this policy moves forward.

The League is also mindful of the existing siting framework under state law, which places significant authority at the state level. While we recognize the need for a coordinated approach to major energy infrastructure, it remains important that municipal input is meaningfully incorporated and that local concerns are fully considered as part of the decision-making process.

As discussion of this legislation continues, the League stands ready to work collaboratively with the sponsors, state agencies, and stakeholders to help address these considerations. We believe there is an opportunity to build upon the bill's ratepayer protections while also ensuring that municipal impacts, particularly related to infrastructure, environmental resources, and public safety, are appropriately recognized and addressed.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide input on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R.R.R.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Corporations Committee