

Good Evening Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Michael R. Caine, and I am honored to stand before you today as a concerned citizen and a vice president of council 94 local 2879 to voice my support for HB7249. This bill represents a crucial step forward in addressing restoring longevity of which, in return, aims to solve, in some way, an increase in base salary for state workers. This affects state workers with 10 and 20 years of state service. Its passage is imperative for the well-being of our state employees and their hard-working union families.

For background, I am an Audio-Visual Engineer and IT Integrator for Rhode Island College. I have been a Union Vice President for Council 94 Local 2879 since Fall of 2022. As a Council 94 local leadership position, in combination with my background. I blend a mixed blue-collar and white-collar background into a distinct type of employee. I have witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by individuals and families affected by tireless amounts of Cost-of-Living expenses and Consumer Price Index increases. Through my experiences, I understand the profound impact legislative action can have on ordinary citizens' lives. Longevity in this case, in restoration thereof if this bill were to pass, would be incredibly beneficial to State of Rhode Island employees.

The issue of restoring longevity is one that cannot be ignored any longer. Too many hardworking families are struggling to make ends meet, and too many individuals are being left behind by our current financial-economic environment. We must take decisive action to address these systemic inequalities and ensure that every member of our state employee workforce has a better opportunity to make an additional salary increase. It is important to mention that this bill includes language of "All state employees" showing that this bill affects both union and nonunion state employees.

In conclusion, I urge each member of this esteemed committee to carefully consider the merits of HB7249. By supporting this bill, you have the power to make a tangible difference in the lives of countless individuals and families across our great state. Together, we can build a brighter, more prosperous future for all rhode islanders.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Michael R. Caine

Vice President Council 94, Local 2879

For in favor of HB 7249