



State of Rhode Island

Department of State | Office of the Secretary of State

Gregg M. Amore, *Secretary of State*

April 24, 2025

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance

RE: In support of HJR5234 – Joint Resolution Making an Appropriation of \$500,000 to the United Way of Rhode Island for the 2-1-1 Human Services Hotline

Dear Chair Abney,

I write in support of Joint Resolution 5234, legislation that would authorize the appropriation of \$500,000 to United Way of Rhode Island to provide operational support for the 2-1-1 hotline.

2-1-1 plays a vital role in connecting individuals and families with essential resources and support services, particularly during times of crisis. Whether someone is in need of food assistance, housing support, mental health services, or other vital resources, 2-1-1 serves as a lifeline, providing access to assistance and guidance 24/7.

The funding provided through HJR5234 is essential to ensuring that 2-1-1 services can continue to meet the growing needs of Rhode Islanders. Without adequate funding, many individuals would be left without access to critical services and support systems, exacerbating existing challenges and widening disparities within our community.

During election season, the Department of State partners with the United Way to utilize the 2-1-1 hotline to ensure Rhode Islanders have easy access to election information. During the 2024 election cycle, 4,729 voters contacted the 2-1-1 hotline to find their polling place, polling place hours, information on how to submit their mail ballot, and other important election information.

Therefore, I encourage this Committee and the full House to support the appropriation proposed in HJR5234, as investing in 2-1-1 will ensure that the vital services provided under this system remain accessible to all Rhode Islanders who may need them.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michelle Arias, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, at marias@sos.ri.gov.

Sincerely,

Gregg M. Amore
Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Mary Ann Shallcross Smith