



THE CITY OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND - AMERICA'S FIRST RESORT
DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES

May 21, 2025

Christopher O'Brien, Committee Clerk
House Finance Committee
State House
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903
Email: HouseFinance@rilegislature.com

RE: House Bill H 5317: Revisions to RIGL 24-8.1-2
"Relocation of Utility Services"

Honorable Chairman and Committee Members:

My name is Robert C. Schultz Jr., and I am the General Manager and Chief Engineer of the City of Newport, Department of Utilities (NWD), which provides drinking water to the residents and businesses for the City of Newport, the Town of Middletown, a portion of the Town of Portsmouth, Naval Station Newport, and the Portsmouth Water Fire District. The NWD supports the proposed amendments to RIGL 24-8.1-2, "Relocation of Utility Services." As currently constituted, RIGL 24-8.1-2 places an unfair and unwarranted burden on municipal and quasi-municipal public utilities that provide water and sewer service to its residents without regard for availability of funding, as well as probable conflicts with a utilities' capital improvement plan and/or current construction plans. The State should not place the costs associated with the relocation of municipal water or sewer infrastructure as part of a state-initiated highway or roadway project, and they should not be placed on the ratepayers of the affected utility. Public water suppliers are already struggling with the high costs to deliver a safe and reliable water supply. The current legislation exposes public water suppliers, like NWD, to unexpected and unwarranted expenses, which would be passed on to its ratepayers.

For the reasons noted above, the NWD supports the amendments to RIGL 24-8.1-2 as proposed by House Bill H 5317.

I appreciate your consideration.

Respectfully,

Robert C Schultz Jr.
General Manager/Chief Engineer
City of Newport
Department of Utilities