

Letter of support – RI State History Center FY2027 budget, Article 6 Question 6

To Chair Abney and the members of the House Committee on Finance:

As former State Historic Preservation Officer and director of the Rhode Island Colonial Charter Museum project when it opened in 2013, I write today in support of the proposal included in the Governor's budget for the Rhode Island State History Center, funded by \$45 million of the general obligation bond in question 6.

It is frankly embarrassing that, unlike 49 other states, Rhode Island does not have its own dedicated state archives building designed to preserve the State's most important historic documents and exhibit the finest historical and cultural assets in its collections.

Despite its rich history, Rhode Island is the only state without such a building. For decades, the state has rented substandard office space, placing priceless documents and artifacts at risk, and denying students, tourists and historians a quality space designed to archival best practice standards and including public exhibition space where the best of the collection can be showcased and celebrated.

I urge you to approve this budget item. On our nation's 250th anniversary, it is finally time to do the right thing and create a new Rhode Island State History Center.

Sincerely,

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