

Feb. 6, 2026

To Rep. Abney and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I write today in support of the proposal included in the Governor's budget for the Rhode Island State History Center, funded by the general obligation bond in question Six.

Rhode Island is fortunate to have a rich and storied history, from its role in the nation's founding through generations of workers and immigrants challenging existing roles and re-shaping the New England story. Despite the ongoing growth in local collections, such as the new archives of the Institute for Labor Studies and Research,

Despite our rich heritage, Rhode Island lacks a permanent space in which local visitors and researchers can explore the state's treasures up close. We deserve a State History Center with dedicated, safe exhibit space for our archival materials where Rhode Islanders can see them and participate in this continuing story. Not only would this benefit Rhode Islanders – students on field trips, local historians, and so many others – but it would serve as a tourism driver and capitalize on what we know is a booming historic tourism industry. RILHS is excited that Secretary of State Gregg Amore is continuing the work of making the building of a State Archives a reality. We are also appreciative of Governor McKee for providing an opportunity for voters to approve this bond.

In 2026, as we recognize our nation's semiquincentennial anniversary, the State History Center is an ideal project to leave a lasting legacy on our state, and members of the RI Labor History Society urge the funding of this project.

Miriam Reumann
President, RILHS



