



# STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

## OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

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Daniel J. McKee **Governor**  
Kasim J. Yarn **Director**

February 3, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney  
Chair, House Committee on Finance  
State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: H7127 - AN ACT MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE STATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027 (MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE STATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027)**

Dear Chair Abney:

I submit this letter for the record to formally express the Office of Veterans Services' strong support for H7127, Article 6, Question 6, scheduled for hearing on February 3, 2026.

Governor McKee's budget proposal includes \$45 million in a general obligation bond for the construction of a new Rhode Island State History Center. Rhode Island's history is both rich and nationally significant. Our state played a pivotal role in the American Revolution and in the founding of our nation's armed forces. Yet today, much of this invaluable history remains inaccessible to the public, preserved out of sight due to the absence of a permanent facility. Rhode Islanders deserve a State History Center that provides secure, modern exhibit space where our archival collections can be safely displayed and seen by all.

A State History Center would benefit our residents, student field trips, local historians, and so many others – but it would also serve as a tourism driver and capitalize on what we know is a booming historic tourism industry.

As a member of the RI250 Commission, we're responsible for sharing our state's deep history. This year we recognize our nation's semi quincentennial anniversary and a State History Center represents a forward looking investment and a lasting legacy for future generations.

Thank you for your time, your ongoing partnership, and your unwavering support of Rhode Island's Veterans and military families. I respectfully ask for your vote in support of H7127, Article 6, Question 6.

Sincerely,

Kasim J. Yarn  
Director of Veterans Services

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance  
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel for the Speaker of the House of  
Representatives  
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy