



Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.
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February 11, 2026

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

RE: CCRI's GO Bond Request for the Workforce Innovation Center

As Business Manager of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 99, I represent over 1000 men and women who provide their skills through our vast network of signatory contractors in the Electrical Industry in the State of Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. I also serve as one, if not the only, voice of the men and women who are not yet fortunate enough to be represented by an electrical labor union in the state of Rhode Island.

I am writing to you today in support of the *General Obligation bond for CCRI's Workforce Innovation Center* at the Warwick Campus.

It is well known that the IBEW has mastered the art of apprenticeship for well over a century, but we do not feed every industry. The Workforce Innovation Center at CCRI will provide critical training for people entering advanced manufacturing, IT, Maritime and other fields that are in demand. It also will have the ability to provide pathways to apprenticeship into the skilled trades or even actual apprenticeships if they wish. In addition, the construction of the facility will provide much needed employment for the skilled crafts men and women of the State of Rhode Island.

There is no doubt that there is always a need for better training in many professions in Rhode Island and this innovation center has the serious potential to provide opportunities to the men and women planning to enter into these careers. The IBEW occasionally will accept people into our apprenticeship who have had some training in facilities that we do not manage. When we accept those men and women into our apprenticeship, those students often have the basics under control so we can take the training from there.

In conclusion, growing up in Warwick and living most of my life in town, CCRI has always been recognized as a reliable fixture for modestly priced education to help people enter into a variety of careers. Both my late Mother and Sister are graduates, in the same year, back when the facility was just one campus known as RI Junior College. I know firsthand that their experience with CCRI was a positive one and assisted both of them into viable carriers in business. Since then the college has expanded in many ways and this innovation center I believe has the potential to be a crowning achievement for the college. With that, I again support the request for the General Obligation bond for the CCRI Innovation Center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph L. Walsh, Jr / Business Manager

cc:

Committee Members

Christopher O'Brien Committee Clerk

Paul Macdonald / IBEW Lobbyist

BuildRI

RI AFL-CIO

