



February 26, 2026

Hon. Marvin Abney
Chairman
c/o HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov
House Committee on Finance
Room 35
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for Article 6- Question 3: Economic Development

Dear Chair Abney:

BuildRI is a domestic non-profit trade association comprised of four (4) contractor associations (the Labor Relations Division of the RI Chapter of the Associated General Contractors, the New England Mechanical Contractors' Ass'n, the RI Mason Contractors' Ass'n, and the RI and Southeast MA Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors' Ass'n), and sixteen (16) Local Trade Unions that make up the Rhode Island Building and Construction Trades Council representing an approximately 10,000 local tradesmen and women. On behalf of our organization, I write in SUPPORT of the above referred to Budget Article for the reasons that follow.

This proposed bond question would authorize \$115,000,000 to invest in pad-ready industrial sites, modern life sciences and research and development facilities, and expanded maritime and defense infrastructure through Smart Bay and the Quonset Development Corporation.

Rhode Island has positioned itself as a leader in defense manufacturing and maritime innovation, particularly through the continued growth of the Quonset Business Park. Strategic investments in site readiness and infrastructure are essential to maintaining that competitive edge. By creating pad-ready sites and modern facilities, the State will accelerate private-sector investment, and every new facility built represents family-supporting jobs for our members.

The proposed \$115 million will generate substantial construction activity the Rhode Island Building Trades and our contracting partners. From environmental remediation and utility installation to vertical construction of advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and defense facilities, this funding will translate directly into thousands of work hours for Rhode Island's skilled building trades workforce.

For the 10,000 men and women of the Rhode Island Building Trades, this bond represents meaningful opportunity: family-sustaining wages, employer-funded healthcare and retirement benefits, and apprenticeship pathways that allow the next generation to enter the middle class without incurring college debt. These projects will also support small and medium-sized Rhode Island contractors and suppliers, strengthening our local economy and expanding the state's tax base.

BuildRI respectfully requests the House Finance Committee to add language clarifying any development utilizing these funds shall comply with RIGL 37-13; Rhode Island's Prevailing Wage Law. These labor standards ensure that not only do these taxpayer funds support local wages and benefits, but levels the playing field and dissuades unscrupulous contractors from being awarded these construction contracts.

Investing in site development and growth industry infrastructure ensures that Rhode Island is prepared to compete for major employers while simultaneously creating immediate construction employment and long-term economic returns. BuildRI and our partners commend the Governor and his administration for advancing this forward-looking proposal and respectfully urge favorable consideration.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Gregory A. Mancini

Executive Director/General Counsel