



*Distinctive Communities
Powerful Alliance*

March 24, 2026

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

RE: FY2027 BUDGET – EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF COMMERCE

Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write to express our support for the proposed FY2027 budget for the Executive Office of Commerce, before the House Finance Subcommittee on General Government.

The League appreciates the Governor's continued investment in economic development initiatives within the Executive Office of Commerce that directly support cities and towns. These include funding for site readiness, Main Streets, and related community development programs that strengthen local business districts, enhance municipal assets, and position communities for long-term growth.

We are particularly encouraged by the inclusion of funding for placemaking-related initiatives within Commerce programs. Originally developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, these efforts have proven to be a valuable resource for municipalities. Through grants supporting events, public space improvements, and initiatives that promote hospitality and tourism districts, placemaking investments have helped communities attract visitors, support small businesses, and foster vibrant local economies. Establishing this type of programming as an ongoing component of the Commerce portfolio will provide cities and towns with a more consistent and reliable resource to continue this important work.

Municipalities are on the front lines of economic development, and investments through the Executive Office of Commerce ensure that local leaders have the tools needed to respond to community needs, support business growth, and enhance quality of life for residents.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective. The League looks forward to working collaboratively to advance policies and investments that benefit our communities and the state as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Finance Committee