



**DONALD R. GREBIEN
MAYOR**



The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House, Room 306
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

I write to express my strong support for H7467, legislation that would create a dedicated fund for public art and reallocate a portion of the state's hotel tax to better serve tourism development efforts across Rhode Island.

As Mayor of Pawtucket, I have seen firsthand how strategic investments in tourism, arts, and culture can transform communities, strengthen local economies, and create lasting opportunities for residents and businesses alike. Tourism is one of Rhode Island's fastest-growing economic sectors, supporting tens of thousands of jobs and generating critical revenue in every region of our state.

This legislation represents an important step forward in ensuring that those benefits are distributed more equitably. By reallocating the existing five percent (5%) hotel tax contribution to Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, we can better align resources with statewide priorities, supporting tourism development, expanding public art initiatives, and investing in events that draw visitors to all corners of Rhode Island.

This proposal is not about diminishing the success of any one region. Rather, it is about building on that success and creating a more balanced, inclusive approach that allows every community to contribute to, and benefit from, our state's growing tourism economy.

In Pawtucket and throughout the Blackstone Valley, we are witnessing a powerful resurgence driven by collaboration, creativity, and strategic partnerships. From cultural programming and public art to destination events and new venues like Centreville Bank Stadium, we are creating experiences that attract visitors, support local businesses, and instill pride in our communities.

A dedicated fund for public art will further enhance these efforts. Public art not only beautifies our cities and towns, but also tells our stories, celebrates our diverse cultures, and creates vibrant spaces that draw residents and visitors alike. Coupled with targeted investments in tourism development and regional events, this legislation will help unlock the full potential of Rhode Island's tourism economy.

I urge you to support H7467 and help ensure that tourism dollars are working for the entire state, fueling economic growth, supporting local communities, and strengthening Rhode Island's identity as a premier destination.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to the people of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Grebien". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "D" and a period at the end.

Donald R. Grebien
Mayor, City of Pawtucket