

*Town of Westerly
Rhode Island*

OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER
Shawn M. Lacey, Town Manager



Town Hall
45 Broad Street
Westerly, RI 02891
TEL: (401) 348-2530
www.WesterlyRI.gov

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House Finance Committee Members
82 Smith Street
Providence, R.I., 02903
housefinance@rilegislature.gov

Subject: Letter of Support for H7467 – Tourism Funding Allocation

Dear Governor McKee, Members of the General Assembly, and Members of the Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Town of Westerly, I am writing to express our support for H7467, legislation concerning the allocation of hotel tax revenue for tourism development in Rhode Island.

The greater South County region are significant contributors to the state's tourism economy. Our businesses, seasonal workforce, and events drive substantial visitation and generate meaningful hotel occupancy, particularly during the summer months.

Under the current structure, a portion of hotel tax revenue generated in regions such as ours is directed to the Providence/Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau, regardless of where that revenue originates. While we respect the important role that organizations play in promoting Rhode Island, this model does not always allow for proportional reinvestment in the communities generating that activity.

H7467 presents a constructive, statewide approach by redirecting this portion of funding to the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation for broader tourism development. This framework creates an opportunity for more balanced investment across all regions of the state.

For communities like the Town of Westerly, this could support:

- Tourism-driven events and programming that attract visitors
- Beautification and infrastructure improvements that enhance the guest experience
- Targeted marketing efforts that directly drive visitation
- Local economic activity that benefits small businesses and seasonal employment

Ensuring that tourism-generated revenue can be reinvested in the regions that help produce it strengthens not only local economies, but Rhode Island's overall tourism brand. We respectfully urge your support of H7467 and appreciate your continued focus on policies that promote economic growth across all parts of the state.

Sincerely,

Shawn M. Lacey
Town Manager
Town of Westerly