

April 14, 2026

Re: Support for House Bill 8144

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Rachel Duval, and I serve as Director of Operations & Events at Fort Adams Trust. I am writing in strong support of House Bill 8144, and specifically Section 1(l), which would direct \$5 million in Green Economy and Clean Energy Bond funding to the preservation, restoration, and improved public accessibility of historic Fort Adams.

While I have not lived in Rhode Island my entire life, the years I have spent here have been deeply shaped by Fort Adams. Through my work—and through the countless visitors, events, and community moments I've been part of—I have seen firsthand how meaningful this place is to people across the state and beyond.

Fort Adams is the largest coastal fortification in the United States and a National Historic Landmark that has stood at the entrance to Narragansett Bay for 200 years. It is not only a historic treasure, but also a major economic driver. According to a University of Rhode Island study commissioned by DEM, Fort Adams State Park generates \$63.9 million in annual economic output and supports over 750 jobs—making it the highest-impact site in Rhode Island's State Parks system.

At the Fort Adams Trust, we are committed stewards. On a daily basis, I see areas of the fort that must remain closed to the public due to safety concerns—limiting access to spaces that would otherwise deepen the visitor experience and bring more of this historic site to life. While the Trust has invested millions of dollars into stabilization and restoration, the scale of the fort—and the challenges of its coastal environment—require continued support. This \$5 million investment would allow us to address urgent preservation needs and expand safe public access to areas that are currently inaccessible.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support and advance H8144 and give Rhode Island voters the opportunity to support the future of Fort Adams.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Rachel Duval

Director of Operations & Events

Fort Adams Trust