



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

Via Electronic Mail

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Letter Regarding House Bill 8179 – An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government – 2021 Act on Climate

Dear Chair Abney:

I am writing on behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Revenue, Division of Taxation (“Division”), to: i) express concerns regarding issues with proposed House Bill 8179 as currently drafted; ii) explain the background and current statutory context in order to clarify the intended and unintended consequences of this bill; and iii) make recommendations and request your support in implementing those recommendations.

This letter is not intended as a position in support of or opposition to the bill, but only as recommendations on drafting to provide clarity in the bill and to aid tax administration and compliance.

As you know, this bill would amend R.I. Gen. Laws § 46-12.7-4.1 (“Uniform oil response and prevention fee”) to increase the fee to ten cents (\$0.10). The bill further would amend R.I. Gen. Laws § 46-12.7-13 (“Oil Spill Prevention, Administration and Response Fund – Preventative uses of the fund”) to provide that funds allocated to the fund be used to support “the executive climate change coordinating council (EC4) efforts to reduce climate emissions and meet the act on climate goals.” The proposed bill would also amend R.I. Gen. Laws § 46-12.9-5 (“Rhode Island Underground Storage Tank Financial Responsibility Act – Purposes of fund”) to include additional purposes for the fund. The bill would be effective upon passage.

As drafted, there is an internal conflict between R.I. Gen. Laws § 46-12.7-4.1(a), which establishes the fee at five cents (\$0.05) and the amendment in subsection (d) to increase the fee from five cents (\$0.05) to ten cents (\$0.10). Further, the Division is concerned with the bill’s “upon passage” effective date given the need to update forms and the Division’s internal system, as well as impacts on external stakeholders, prior to its implementation and respectfully suggests that the effective date be January 1, 2027. The Division respectfully suggests that the bill be redrafted to provide clarity on these issues.

The Division takes no position with respect to the remainder of the proposed legislation. Rather, the Division is concerned solely with the issues of clarity, tax compliance, and tax administration.

I look forward to working with you to address the issues raised in this letter and appreciate your consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Msavage", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neena S. Savage
Tax Administrator

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance (via:
HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov)
The Honorable Terri Cortvriend (via: rep-cortvriend@rilegislature.gov)
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy
Jane E. Cole, Interim Director, Department of Revenue