



State of Rhode Island
Office of the General Treasurer

James A. Diossa
General Treasurer

14 April 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance

RE: *2026-H 8316 – A Joint Resolution – Making an Appropriation of \$150,000 to Establish a Statewide Main Street Coordinating Program*

Chair Abney:

I write to express my support for 2026-H 8316, which would advance municipal development and revitalization through continued investment in the Main Street Rhode Island Program (the “Main Street Program”). This legislation represents both a prudent financial decision and a meaningful investment in the social and economic vitality of our communities.

Across the country – and here in Rhode Island – communities that have embraced main street initiatives have seen material economic growth and renewed sense of identity. These programs do more than improve storefronts; they strengthen the fabric of our communities. Main Streets in Woonsocket, Wickford and Warren have long represented the heart and soul of their community. They provide places where families can gather during the holidays, where small businesses can take root and grow, and where visitors are drawn to experience the character of our state. They are also engines of local economic activity and catalysts for investment.

During my time as Mayor of Central Falls, I was proud to champion the Broad Street Regeneration Initiative in partnership with my colleagues in Cumberland and Pawtucket. This effort brought together community leaders, residents, businesses and local stakeholders to revitalize a critical commercial corridor that links all three municipalities. The results were tangible: increased economic activity, renewed tourism, preservation of historic assets, and a strengthened sense of community rooted in the culture and diversity of the Blackstone Valley.

Last session, the General Assembly authorized a three-year Main Street Program but only seeded the program with a one-time \$125,000 appropriation. During the intervening year, the Program has helped finance 11 different cohorts across 10 cities and towns. By leveraging public and private

resources while implementing proven practices in partnership with Main Street America. Such early successes underscore program effectiveness and future potential.

This \$150,000 appropriation will fund the second year of this three-year pilot and ensure that the Program can continue to build on its momentum. It will allow more communities to participate, deepen the impact in existing cohorts and spur further economic growth across our state.

Through the Broad Street initiative, I witnessed firsthand the positive transformation that thoughtful, community-driven investment can achieve. Continued funding for the Main Street Program will empower more Rhode Island communities to realize similar outcomes—stronger local economies, vibrant commercial districts, and an enhanced quality of life for residents.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James A. Diossa', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

James A. Diossa
General Treasurer

cc: The Honorable Art Handy