

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND



Department of Corrections

Wayne T. Salisbury Jr., Director
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The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
House Committee on Finance
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

April 16, 2026

Re: H7684- Relating to Public Officers and Employees - Retirement System- Contributions and Benefits

Dear Chairperson Abney:

This evening the House Committee on Finance will consider House Bill #7684. This legislation would add the positions of deputy chief inspector and inspector to RIGL § 36-10-9.2, the correctional officer pension schedule. This legislation is essential to ensure that the retirement benefits of correctional officers are not adversely impacted when they are hired as an inspector or deputy chief inspector, which currently requires a shift from one pension schedule to another.

This legislation has been requested annually since 2023 and passed the Senate last year. It is critical to address a major discrepancy between the pension schedules assigned to correctional officers and inspectors. The difference in pension impact, using the example of a correctional officer with 20 years of service accepting an Inspector position, is estimated at approximately \$50,000 annually when accounting for salary, benefits, and health coverage.

This pension discrepancy is a significant barrier to internal promotion within the Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC) and places the Office of Inspections, which is RIDOC's internal affairs unit, at a disadvantage due to a lack of correctional experience on the team. The perspective of correctional officers serving in this role is critical to efficient and informed investigations and to the transfer of institutional knowledge and practices to this team.

The Office of Inspections is currently comprised of five inspectors and a deputy chief inspector as well as the chief inspector. Over the last two years, the Department has had three correctional staff serve as inspectors in an acting capacity. Two of the three opted not to apply for the permanent position when it was posted due principally to the concerns related to the impact on their pension benefits. One correctional staff member applied and accepted the position but is considering returning to her previous role within the six months allotted to do so due to the expected pension impact. It is important to note that aside from this staff member, all other inspectors, including the deputy chief inspector and chief inspector, are retired from outside law enforcement agencies with no previous state service and unlikely to achieve 25 years of service.

The mission of RIDOC is to maintain a safe and secure correctional system that prioritizes the well-being of staff, incarcerated individuals, and the community. We strive to achieve this by promoting a respectful work environment, utilizing data-driven practices to guide decisions, and offering a wide range of programs to facilitate successful reintegration into the community and reduce recidivism.

If a correctional officer were to accept such a promotion to the role of inspector, it creates significant administrative complexity when personnel move between different retirement systems. For example, the state must move a correctional officer (a member of the correctional officer retirement pension schedule) who accepts a promotion to Inspector into the traditional state retirement system pension schedule. If that Inspector were later promoted to Chief Inspector, the state will have to move them back into the correctional officer retirement pension schedule. This legislation would not have a retroactive effect.

Despite the name of the statute “Retirement on service allowance – Correctional Officers”, not all the original titles in the statute are members of the Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers (RIBCO) and have always included some titles who are not or never were correctional officers. Additionally, several job titles within the statute are not part of the correctional officer hierarchy, including associate director, and classification counselor. Most of these associate director positions have little to no inmate contact, none are in RIBCO, and none of them require graduation from the correctional officer training academy. Therefore, excluding an Inspector from the system simply because an Inspector is not a correctional officer is illogical and inconsistent with existing statutory structure.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wayne T. Salisbury Jr.".

Wayne T. Salisbury Jr.
Director

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Representative Matthew S. Dawson
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House



State of Rhode Island
Office of the General Treasurer

James A. Diossa
General Treasurer

9 April 2026

The Honorable Louis DiPalma
Chair, Senate Committee on Finance

RE: 2026-S 2839 – *An Act Relating to Public Officers and Employees – Retirement System – Contributions and Benefits*

Chair DiPalma:

I write in response to your request for a pension impact note concerning 2026-S 2839, which includes the Deputy Chief of Inspection and Inspectors in the Department of Corrections' ("DOC") pension system. Currently, the Deputy Chief of Inspection and Inspectors are classified as state employees and receive benefits through the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island ("ERSRI") as any other state employee.

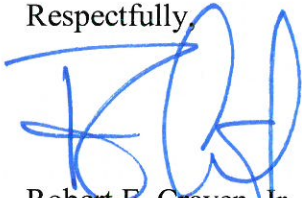
Corrections' employees in ERSRI still receive retirement benefits consistent with any other member of the state system. However, those in the DOC system receive a comparatively better benefit, such as an earlier retirement age. Employer and employee contribution rates are higher during an employees' working career to pay for this benefit in retirement.

As drafted, the proposed legislation would have a prospective impact on members of ERSRI working at DOC with the title Deputy Chief of Inspection or Inspector. As such, this class of employees would accrue time under the Department of Corrections' plan going forward and could apply time previously accrued under ERSRI to their retirement under the DOC plan pursuant to a statutory formula.

An actuarial assessment concerning the pension impact of this proposal determined that it would increase the total state contribution to the pension system by \$120,000 in Fiscal Year 2027. This figure represents the annual budgetary increase attributable to this change. Since cost is expressed as a percentage of payroll, it will increase over the 20-year statutory amortization period for the unfunded liability.

Please feel free to reach out by email at Robert.CravenJr@treasury.ri.gov or by phone at (401) 330-0661 should you have any questions concerning the attached analysis.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Craven, Jr.', with a stylized flourish extending to the left.

Robert E. Craven, Jr.
Director of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Office of the General Treasurer



April 3, 2026

Mr. Andrew Roos
Executive Director
Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island
50 Service Avenue
Warwick, RI 02886

Re: **Actuarial Impact for 2026 - S 2839**

Dear Andrew:

Per your request, we have analyzed the impact of 2026 - S 2839. This Bill would include the deputy chief of inspection and inspector within the provision of law related to retirement on service allowance relating to correctional officers and is effective upon passage.

We received data on six individuals that would be impacted by the Bill.

We have measured the impact on the Fiscal Year 2028 contribution rate.

As shown, there is an increase in accrued liability for the State Employees plan of \$0.23 million. The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2028 contribution rate increases by 0.01% of payroll from 27.97% to 27.98%. The increased rate results in an increase to the first-year projected contribution of \$0.12 million.

State Employees	Current Provisions	Proposed Change	Increase/Decrease
Total Normal Cost	7.87%	7.88%	0.01%
Unfunded actuarial accrued liability	\$1962.49 million	\$1962.72 million	\$0.23 million
Funded ratio	63.87%	63.86%	-0.01%
a. Percent of Payroll	27.97%	27.98%	0.01%
b. Projected payroll	\$983.88 million	\$983.88 million	\$0.00 million
c. Estimated dollar amount	\$275.19 million	\$275.31 million	\$0.12 million

Assumptions and Methods

Our analysis was prepared based on member data, financial information, and the actuarial methods used in preparing the June 30, 2025, actuarial valuation reports, the most recently completed one, and is subject to all of the disclosures contained therein.

Mr. Andrew Roos
Executive Director
April 3, 2026
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Please see the June 30, 2025, actuarial valuation report for a summary of all other assumptions used in completing this analysis.

Certification

The undersigned are independent actuaries and consultants. Joseph P. Newton and Paul T. Wood are Members of the American Academy of Actuaries, and meet the Qualification Standards of the American Academy of Actuaries. Finally, both of the undersigned are experienced in performing valuations for large public retirement systems.

We are available to answer any questions in connection with this valuation of the plan or the information presented in this report.

Sincerely,



Joseph P. Newton, FSA, EA, MAAA
Pension Market Leader and Actuary



Paul T. Wood, ASA, FCA, MAAA
Team Leader and Actuary

