

April 16, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair  
House Finance Committee  
Rhode Island House of Representatives  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: HOUSE BILL 8170 - AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- TEACHERS' RETIREMENT

Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we respectfully submit testimony regarding House Bill 8170, which would expand the ability of retired educators, administrators, and staff to exceed the current ninety-day post-retirement employment cap and work up to one hundred eighty days per school year under certain conditions.

The League would like to express its appreciation for the intent of this legislation. We recognize and value the ongoing staffing challenges faced by our local education authorities, and we also acknowledge the important contributions that retired educators can make in helping to address critical vacancies and ensuring continuity of instruction and services for students.

While the League understands and supports the policy goal of providing districts with additional flexibility to meet staffing needs, there are concerns regarding the fiscal and operational implications of the proposal.

The bill requires local education authorities to pay the employer contribution to the retirement system for rehired retirees as if they were newly hired employees. Although these individuals would not accrue additional service credit or pension benefits, this provision nonetheless represents a direct and potentially significant cost to local education budgets, depending on the extent to which districts utilize this option.

The overall fiscal impact of the legislation is difficult to project, as participation by local education authorities is optional rather than mandated. As a result, utilization may vary significantly across districts, creating uneven and unpredictable budgetary impacts statewide.

The League also notes that the definition of "specialized need" and the framework for exceeding the ninety-day threshold may result in variability in implementation across local education authorities, which could create administrative complexity and additional reporting requirements.

Given these uncertainties, the League Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 22-12-3, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns is noting possible municipal fiscal impacts and requesting a fiscal note for the Committee's consideration.

For these reasons, while the League appreciates the intent of the legislation and the challenges it seeks to address, we respectfully submit these concerns for the Committee's consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Rossi", written in a cursive style.

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Finance Committee