



*Distinctive Communities  
Powerful Alliance*

April 28, 2026

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

RE: HOUSE BILL 7581 - AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE EDUCATION EQUITY AND PROPERTY TAX RELIEF ACT

Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, which represents all 39 municipalities, we write in support of House Bill 7581. This legislation establishes a new categorical funding category within the education funding formula to support civics education, and it reflects an important investment in both our students and our communities.

The League strongly supports efforts that strengthen civic knowledge, community engagement, and student preparedness for participation in public life. Rhode Island's municipalities rely on informed residents who understand how government functions at all levels, how public decisions are made, and how they can meaningfully engage in their communities. High-quality civics education helps build this foundation, encouraging lifelong civic participation and strengthening local democracy.

Municipal officials see every day the value of engaged residents, whether through participation in public meetings, service on local boards and commissions, or involvement in community problem-solving. By creating a dedicated funding stream for civics education, this legislation recognizes the importance of ensuring students across all communities have equitable access to instruction in government, history, and civic responsibility. Just as importantly, by structuring this support as categorical aid, House Bill 7581 helps ensure that school districts can implement and sustain civics programming without increasing pressure on local property taxpayers, which remains a significant concern for municipalities facing ongoing fiscal challenges.

Thank you for allowing us to share our perspective on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Finance Committee