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April 28, 2026

House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H7244

The Rhode Island Water Works Association (RIWWA) is a professional trade organization that represents water supplies of the State of Rhode Island.

We are in support of House Bill 7244 introduced by Representatives McGaw, Cortvriend, Craven, Cotter, DeSimone, Donovan, Shallcross Smith, Kislak, Boylan, and Potter.

House Bill 7244 serves as an example of the growing fiscal pressures critical utility services face. Affordable utility services like water, wastewater and stormwater management are vital for everyday life and are crucial for ensuring public health, sanitation and environmental sustainability. Relocation of utilities under current law (24-8.1-2) places a burden on municipal and quasi-municipal public utilities that provide public water service to its customers without regard for 1) availability of funding; 2) current plans and construction already undertaken by the utilities; 3) probable conflict with short, medium and long term planning by the utilities; 4) as well as ignoring necessary and advisable permitting and approval processes for many of the utilities subject to RI State Water Resources Board, RIDOH, and EPA rules, and regulations.

Many of the state roadway projects that 24-8.1-2 applies to are federally funded. Requiring a local utility to contribute to a project that is already fully funded may interfere with the outside funding for the overall project and additionally is demanding a financial contribution for something that RIDOT already has adequate funding for.

RIWWA fully supports House Bill H7244 which would amend 24-8.1-2 as it applies to public water and wastewater utilities and removes the burdensome unexpected and unnecessary costs to our local public utilities.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact me at (401) 683-2090

Sincerely,


Jessica Lynch, P.E.
President