The Narragansett Bay Commission
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Vincent J. Mesolella
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April 29, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair
House Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Narragansett Bay Commission; House Bill 7590; Against

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to consider the Narragansett Bay Commission's (NBC) position on 2026 H7590, which proposes to create an Office of Inspector General (OIG). The NBC is a diligent public corporation that strives to go above and beyond in the name of transparency. However, the Office of Inspector General created by H7590 would have overlapping authority and oversight responsibility with other existing agencies in the State, which will result in duplicative efforts, and therefore, unnecessary oversight.

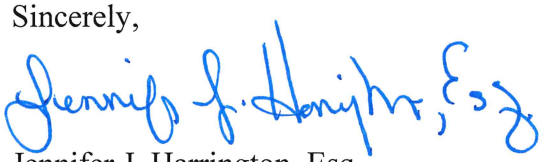
H7590 proposes to create a new OIG for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in the expenditure of public funds. These duties, however, are nearly identical to the duties of the currently empowered Office of Internal Audit (OIA) within the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). There would also be substantial overlap with the responsibilities of the Office of Auditor General, which is tasked with auditing state programs and entities receiving state funds pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 22-13-1 *et seq.* As such, creation of the proposed OIG is unwarranted.

In addition to oversight of OMB and the Office of Auditor General, the NBC is also subject to substantial oversight from several regulating authorities. Specifically, the RI Public Utilities Commission, the RI Department of Environmental Management, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency all have varying degrees of oversight authority over the NBC. Although these agencies conduct oversight for different purposes, the requirements can lead to substantial duplication of efforts. Each of these regulating entities has the authority to inspect the NBC's internal records, which may include auditing our procurement practices, financial documents, internal business policies and procedures, and programmatic files. Furthermore, the NBC is subject to an annual independent financial audit and publishes a complete set of audited financial statements annually.

To that end, the NBC opposes the creation of another oversight agency that will ultimately cost the NBC's ratepayers additional monies without providing benefits above that which are already ensured by existing regulatory oversight. Absent legislation to consolidate the oversight authority into one single agency, the NBC disagrees with the creation of the Office of Inspector General.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



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