

Marc B. Parlange, Ph.D., P.Eng.
President

April 30, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney
Chairman, House Committee on Finance
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H. 7158 An Act Relating to Public Officers and Employees - Insurance Benefits

Dear Chairman Abney and Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to share concerns regarding H. 7158, which would make adjunct faculty members eligible for state employees medical insurance and result in a significant unfunded mandate for the University of Rhode Island (URI).

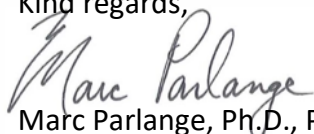
As proposed, the legislation mandates that adjunct faculty at the University of Rhode Island be granted statutory authority to negotiate health insurance benefits if his or her teaching load is 50 percent or greater than that of permanent faculty.

Based on our internal calculations, this has the potential to impact roughly 102 part-time faculty (PTF) members each semester, perhaps more, perhaps less, depending on how the 50% effort is further defined and what the individual assignments are that semester. The total cost could be upwards of an additional \$2.9 million for the 2026 - 2027 academic year if PTF opted in for the most costly insurance option.

The University deeply values our part-time faculty that play a critical role in educating our students and providing industry expertise in the classroom. Philosophically we support the intent of the legislation; however, the University is currently facing an operating budget shortfall for fiscal year (FY) 2027 already. If enacted, H. 7158 would result in a costly unfunded mandate that the University could not absorb.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,



Marc Parlange, Ph.D., P.Eng.
President

CC: Governor Dan McKee

CC: Speaker Joe Shekarchi

CC: Sharon Reynolds Ferland, House Fiscal Advisor