



Mayor of Providence

Brett P. Smiley

May 14, 2026

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

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I support Joint Resolution 7259 which would authorize an appropriation of \$3 million to the Rhode Island Food Bank.

The RI Food Bank provides essential support to some of our most vulnerable neighbors by distributing millions of pounds of food through their network of member agencies. The RI Food Bank generally serves over 89,000 Rhode Islanders a month, and in times of crisis that need increases. Last year, during the federal shutdown when Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits were disrupted, the RI Food Bank stepped in, serving more than 102,000 residents.

During this crisis, the City of Providence partnered closely with the Food Bank to support residents and community organizations. My Administration made funding available to both the Food Bank and to local pantries and meal sites that were stretched for resources and capacity. We also made additional meals available through our Community Meals initiative, which provides meals for youth 18 and under at recreation centers and libraries. I saw firsthand the critical role that the Food Bank plays in stabilizing families during moments of crisis.

With the increasing cost of living and continued uncertainty in federal policy, this \$3 million investment is critical to help ensure that the Food Bank can continue to meet demand. This funding is a necessary investment to maintain stability for thousands of our neighbors who rely on the Rhode Island Food Bank to continue putting food on their tables.

I thank Representative Slater for this important legislation and respectfully urge the Committee to support Joint Resolution 7259.

Sincerely,


Brett P. Smiley
Mayor