



DONALD R. GREBIEN  
MAYOR



May 14, 2026

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

**RE: Testimony in Support of House Bill H7706 — Joint Resolution Making an Appropriation of \$500,000 to the United Way of Rhode Island for the 211 Human Services Hotline**

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

As Mayor of Pawtucket, I write in strong support of **House Bill 7706**, which would appropriate **\$500,000** to support the continued operation and strengthening of United Way of Rhode Island's 211 system.

United Way 211 is Rhode Island's 24/7, multilingual, confidential human services helpline, which connects residents to critical supports including housing, food, utilities, healthcare, behavioral health, childcare, older adult services, disability supports, and crisis assistance. For many residents, 211 is the first place they turn when they do not know where else to go.

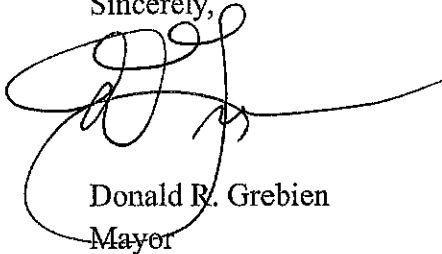
In Pawtucket, residents rely on 211 for help navigating urgent needs such as rent payment assistance, school closure-related breakfast/lunch services, as well as electrical service and heating fuel payment assistance. As local leaders, we see how important it is to have a trusted statewide resource that can help residents access support quickly, confidentially, and effectively.

United Way 211 also strengthens municipal and state service delivery. It helps reduce confusion for residents, supports referrals to nonprofit and public-sector partners, and provides valuable insight into the needs facing communities across Rhode Island. Increased investment in 211 would help sustain this key public infrastructure and ensure residents in every city and town can connect to help when they need it most.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your support for **House Bill H7706** and the proposed **\$500,000 state appropriation** for United Way 211.

Thank you for your leadership and your continued commitment to the well-being of Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Grebien', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Donald R. Grebien  
Mayor