



City of East Providence
Office of the Mayor
Roberto L. DaSilva
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 East Providence, I write in strong support of House Bill H7706, which would appropriate \$500,000 to support the continued operation and strengthening of United Way of Rhode Island's 211 system.

In our city, residents rely on 211 for help navigating urgent needs such as housing, rent payment assistance, electric service payment assistance, heating fuel payment assistance, and food stamps. In 2025 alone, East Providence recorded 1,090 total 211 contacts that addressed 1,874 total needs presented, with housing as the top need category. 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 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,

Roberto L. DaSilva
Mayor