

# THE PROVIDENCE FOUNDATION

May 21, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney  
Chair  
House Committee on Finance  
Rhode Island House of Representatives

***RE: H 8529 – Relating to Health and Safety—The Rhode Island Life Sciences Hub Act***

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of The Providence Foundation's 150 members, I am grateful to have the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H-8529. The Providence Foundation supports this legislation because it strengthens the connection between two important economic development entities: the Rhode Island Life Science Hub and the 195 Redevelopment District Commission.

Decades ago, The Providence Foundation played an instrumental role in the relocation of Interstate 195, which opened these valuable acres for transformative development and public recreational space. Our membership strongly supported the creation of the 195 Redevelopment District Commission, and as a former member of the Providence City Council, I also had the privilege of advocating for the tax treatment of this important district.

Rhode Island has made significant investments in life sciences, innovation, higher education, medical research, and economic development. At the same time, the I-195 Redevelopment District remains one of the state's most important places for job creation, housing, commercial activity, and urban growth. H 8529 helps ensure better coordination between these two entities, both responsible for advancing these priorities.

By adding the chairperson of the 195 Redevelopment District Commission to the Life Science Hub board and adding the chair of the Rhode Island Life Science Hub to the I-195 Commission as an ex officio member, the bill creates a governance connection between the state's life sciences strategy and one of its most important development districts. That alignment is important to ensure these sites are positioned to support innovation, private investment, and long-term economic growth.

H 8529 also supports a more effective development process by clarifying and updating certain powers and duties of the 195 Redevelopment District Commission. These updates can determine whether projects move forward or not.

Finally, the Foundation remains committed to supporting the growth of this district and recognizing that economic development is most successful when strategy, governance, and place-based development work together.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



David A. Salvatore  
Executive Director  
The Providence Foundation