



May 21, 2026

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

Re: Office of Inspector General, H8562

Dear Chairman Abney:

As a former State Senator, I am pleased to submit testimony in support of H8562, which would establish an independent Office of Inspector General in Rhode Island. Although I realize there are concerns about the scope of the Inspector General's jurisdiction, this bill is an important step toward creating an independent office to detect fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement of public funds.

I applaud Speaker Blazewski for making the creation of an Office of Inspector General his first action upon assuming office. Throughout my career in the Rhode Island State Police, serving on the Barrington Town Council, and four terms as a State Senator, I have always maintained that accountability and transparency are essential for effective governance. And I know I am not alone, as I've heard voters on the campaign trail affirming that trust and confidence in government are among their most important concerns.

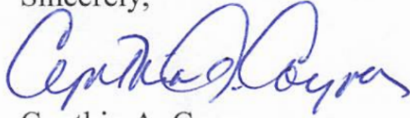
This matter has gained renewed attention and interest, as issues such as the Washington Bridge, along with many national issues, have made accountability, transparency, and trust in government among voters one of the most important priorities. I trust the members of this committee understand and share the concerns voiced by nearly three-quarters of Rhode Islanders in a recent Salve Regina University poll who expressed support for the creation of an independent Office of the Inspector General. Public trust in government is near historic lows, and an independent Office of Inspector General tailored to Rhode Island's needs can prevent mismanagement, foster efficiency, and help restore confidence in government.

This bill would take a positive step forward in restoring trust and efficiency in state government. As others have likely mentioned, a report by the National Association of State Budget Officers found that per-capita spending in states with independent inspector generals was lower than in

states without them, resulting in thousands of dollars in savings for every taxpayer. In a time when every household is struggling to afford the rising cost of living, these savings represent tangible benefits to all Rhode Islanders while helping to improve government and maximize efficiency.

From the start of my campaign, I have vowed to lead the charge to create an independent Office of Inspector General, and I am pleased to support the passage of H8562.

Sincerely,



Cynthia A. Coyne

cc: Representative Scott Slater, First Vice Chair, House Finance Committee
Representative Alex Marszalkowski, Second Vice Chair, House Finance Committee
Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance (via:
HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov)