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February 15, 2022

Hon. Marvin L. Abney
c/o HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov
Chairman
House Committee on Finance, Room 35
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for H-7125; An Act Capital Development Programs for Education

Dear Chairman Abney:

BuildRI is a domestic non-profit trade association comprised of four (4) contractor associations (the Labor Relations Division of the RI Chapter of the Associated General Contractors, the New England Mechanical Contractors' Ass'n, the RI Mason Contractors' Ass'n, and the RI and Southeast MA Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors' Ass'n), and seventeen (17) Local Trade Unions comprised of approximately 10,000 local tradesmen and women. On behalf of our organization, I write to strongly **SUPPORT** of the above referred to legislation for the reasons that follow.

In 2016 Jacobs and Cooperative Strategies conducted a statewide facility condition assessment and master plan of all municipal school facilities. This assessment identified more than \$3 billion in deficiencies in our municipalities' school facilities. Now, since that time the state and many municipalities invested hundreds of millions in rehabilitating existing and/or constructing new school facilities. In fact, since 2018 there has been \$1.75 billion in approvals for school building repairs and replacements in 28 districts that improved 189 buildings and that positively impacted more than 100,000 students—every year; not to mention the 28,000 middle class construction jobs that this much needed investment created.

Unfortunately, however, according to the Jacobs and Cooperative Strategies findings, much more work needs to be done. Passage of H-7125 will put us on a path to making that happen. It will allow the citizens of our state to determine if they want to continue the much-needed investment in our schools to correct our facility deficiencies; it will provide incentives for early childhood education, career and technical education, STEAM facilities, and health improvements; it will also include incentives for energy efficiency/renewable energy improvements; it will require apprenticeship trainee participation on school construction projects; and, it will incentivize school districts to employ more local and MBE contractors.

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This well thought out comprehensive legislation will put our state on a path to rectifying the unacceptable deficiencies in our schools while at the same time generate significant work opportunities for local trades personnel and business opportunities for local businesses. Accordingly, our organization urges you to pass the above referred to bill for the foregoing reasons. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Gregory A. Mancini
Executive Director/General Counsel