March 11, 2021

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance
The State House
Providence, RI 02903

Subject: Support for HB 5696, School Construction Bonds

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the member companies of The Rhode Island Chapter of Associated General Contractors ("RIAGC"), I write in support of the following bond initiative being considered:

- House Bill 5696: To authorize the Town of South Kingstown to issue $85 million in general obligation bonds to finance construction, renovation, and repairs of schools and school facilities.

These investments are part of a comprehensive effort to fix rapidly aging and unsafe schools and educational facilities across the state. In particular, the school construction bonds will ensure that adequate funding is available to fix our schools the right way, one time, rather than the band-aid approach that has led us to this point. This funding will ensure our students can focus on their education in a well- equipped, healthy - and safe - 21st century facility.

Over the past several years, the Governor, the General Treasurer, and the General Assembly have worked together to support similar investments in our state's infrastructure, helping to bring back skilled, well-paying jobs in construction that were lost during the last recession. Your leadership is working to improve the quality of life in Rhode Island, providing better educational outcomes for our young people, and building a stronger economy through job growth. Additionally, as we seek to bolster the state's economic position post-COVID 19, these investments will create much needed jobs and additional economic growth within our communities. We urge you to continue down this path.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kerrie Bennett
Executive Director