



# Westerly Police Department

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**Paul J. Gingerella**

*Chief of Police*

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Chairman Baginski  
House Innovation and Technology Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly

Dear Chairman Baginski and House Innovation and Technology Committee Members,

I write to you in my capacity as Chief of Police for the Town of Westerly, to express my strong support for H-5121, an important piece of legislation that seeks to enhance oversight and accountability within the virtual currency industry, particularly concerning virtual currency kiosks operating in our state.

As law enforcement officers, we are increasingly encountering cases in which unsuspecting individuals are victimized through scams and fraudulent activities involving virtual currency. Criminals are exploiting unregulated and loosely monitored virtual currency kiosks to facilitate illicit transactions, launder money, intimidate and defraud Rhode Island residents. The provisions set forth introduce necessary safeguards, including licensing requirements, transaction disclosures, fraud prevention measures to identify and mitigate fraudulent activity. The bill's requirement for clear consumer warnings and transaction limits will serve to better inform and protect our community members from financial harm.

In Westerly alone many of our citizens have been victims of a crypto related scam that involves the use of crypto ATM's, resulting in the loss of significant amounts of money, sometimes one's entire life savings. When we reach out to these machine owners as part of our investigation, we are met with a lack of empathy and virtually no cooperation as we try to retrieve any money back.

I urge the House Innovation and Technology Committee to support and advance H-5121. This bill represents a significant step forward in our collective effort to combat financial crimes and protect the residents of Rhode Island. Law enforcement stands ready to work alongside policymakers and regulatory bodies to ensure its successful implementation and enforcement.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. Should you require any further input or assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Paul J. Gingerella

Chief of Police