

January 29, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-7212 – RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- ACTIONS BY AND AGAINST TOWNS

Dear Chair McEntee and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write to express our strong support for House Bill 7212. We thank Representative Felix for her leadership in sponsoring this important legislation once again and appreciate the Committee's consideration of our perspective.

House Bill 7212 seeks to address the ongoing inconsistency in how courts apply laws governing tort claims related to road defects. Currently, courts may apply different statutes, including Sections 9-31-2 or 9-31-3 both of which incorporate the proprietary function provision or Section 45-15-8, which does not. This variation has led to confusion and inconsistency in legal decisions, creating uncertainty for municipalities and claimants alike.

By clarifying that claims brought under Chapter 31 of Title 9 are exempt from the provisions of Section 45-15-8, House Bill 7212 ensures a uniform and fair legal framework for municipalities in handling road defect claims. This consistency is essential for cities and towns as they work to maintain their infrastructure while managing legal and financial responsibilities effectively.

We respectfully urge the Committee to support House Bill 7212 and advance this critical legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and for your ongoing commitment to policies that promote clarity and fairness in municipal governance.

Sincerely,



Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Judiciary Committee