

LAW OFFICES

DECOF, MEGA & QUINN, P.C.

ONE SMITH HILL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903

MARK B. DECOF
JEFFREY A. MEGA
MICHAEL P. QUINN, JR.

LEONARD DECOF
(1924-2010)

DONNA M. Di DONATO
TIMOTHY J. GRIMES
SHAD M. MILLER
BRIAN W. MURPHY
TYLER J. PARE
MATTHEW D. ROCHELEAU
MICHAEL J. STEVENSON

MARK J. BRICE, OF COUNSEL

January 29, 2026

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Chairperson Carol Hagan McEntee
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903
(rep-mcentee@rilegislature.gov)

Re: Opposition to 2026 H 7213 – Subsequent Remedial Measures and Reduction of Damages

Dear Chairperson McEntee:

I am writing both individually and as the President of the Rhode Island Association for Justice to respectfully urge the House Judiciary Committee to **reject 2026 H 7213**, which would dramatically weaken the rights of injured Rhode Islanders in two harmful ways.

First, the bill would prohibit the admission of evidence of **subsequent remedial measures**, such as repairs, safety improvements, or policy changes made after an injury occurs. Second, the bill would drastically reduce recoverable damages against municipalities from the long-standing cap of \$100,000 to only \$3,000.

Both provisions represent a retreat from accountability and fairness in Rhode Island's civil justice system.

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Rhode Island Has Long Permitted Subsequent Remedial Evidence

Rhode Island has historically allowed evidence of subsequent repairs or safety changes to be admitted where relevant, trusting juries to consider such evidence appropriately. This long-standing policy reflects Rhode Island's commitment to truth-finding and transparency.

Such evidence is often critical in showing that:

- a dangerous condition existed,
- safer alternatives were feasible, and
- an injury could have been prevented.

Eliminating this evidence would deprive juries of important facts and make it significantly harder for injured citizens to prove legitimate claims.

Slashing the Damages Cap to \$3,000 Would Harm Injured Rhode Islanders

Moreover, H 7213 would reduce the damages available to individuals harmed by municipal negligence from \$100,000 down to only \$3,000.

A \$3,000 limit is not a meaningful remedy. It would not begin to cover:

- emergency medical care,
- hospital bills,
- lost wages,
- physical therapy,
- permanent disability, or
- long-term suffering.

For many serious injuries, \$3,000 would not even pay for a single ambulance ride or emergency room visit.

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This change would effectively immunize municipalities from responsibility for substantial harm, leaving injured Rhode Islanders without adequate compensation and forcing the costs of negligence onto victims, families, and taxpayers.

The Combined Effect Is to Shield Wrongdoing and Deny Justice

Taken together, these provisions would:

- hide important evidence from juries,
- severely restrict compensation even in meritorious cases, and
- undermine incentives for municipalities to correct unsafe conditions before someone is hurt.

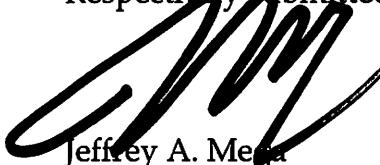
The burden will fall hardest on ordinary Rhode Islanders—people injured on unsafe sidewalks, in public buildings, or through negligent municipal practices—who already face an uphill battle against institutional defendants.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to **oppose H 7213**. Rhode Island should not abandon its long-standing evidentiary policy or reduce municipal accountability to the point where injured citizens are left with only nominal compensation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DECOF, MEGA & QUINN, P.C." followed by "Jeffrey A. MEGA".

JAM/tvb