



*Distinctive Communities  
Powerful Alliance*

March 13, 2026

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

RE: HOUSE BILL 7359 – AN ACT RELATING TO PROPERTY -- PUBLIC AUCTIONS OF REAL ESTATE

Dear Chair McEntee and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write to express our support for House Bill 7359, which would require that public auctions of municipal real estate be conducted in person, unless a court determines that such a process is not feasible and authorizes an alternative method.

Municipalities take seriously their responsibility to manage and dispose of public assets in a manner that is transparent, accountable, and in the best interest of local residents. By requiring that public auctions of municipal real estate occur in person, this legislation strengthens the principle of open and accessible public processes. In-person auctions allow community members, potential bidders, and local officials to observe the proceedings directly, fostering greater confidence in the fairness and integrity of municipal property sales.

This approach also helps ensure that local stakeholders have a meaningful opportunity to participate in these transactions. Increasingly, remote and electronic auction platforms are operated by national or third-party firms that can inadvertently create barriers for local bidders or reduce community visibility into the process. By prioritizing in-person auctions, House Bill 7359 helps preserve a process that is rooted in the community and responsive to local interests, while still allowing flexibility through court authorization when circumstances make an in-person auction impractical.

Importantly, the bill maintains an appropriate balance by allowing the Rhode Island Superior Court to authorize electronic or remote procedures when warranted. This safeguard ensures that municipalities retain a practical pathway to proceed with property sales in exceptional circumstances while preserving the general expectation of public transparency and accessibility.

For these reasons, the League believes House Bill 7359 supports greater public scrutiny, local engagement, and trust in municipal property transactions. We appreciate the General Assembly's attention to ensuring that the disposition of public assets remains open, accountable, and grounded in the interests of Rhode Island communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Judiciary Committee