



Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.
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March 4, 2026

Hon. Carol H. McEntee
Chairperson, House Judiciary Committee,
Rhode Island General Assembly

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RE: SUPPORT FOR H 7352 AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT--THE RHODE ISLAND CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT ACT

Dear Chairperson McEntee,

As Business Manager of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 99, I represent over 1000 men and women who provide their skills through our vast network of signatory contractors in the Electrical Industry in the State of Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. I also serve as one, if not the only, voice of the men and women who are not yet fortunate enough to be represented by an electrical labor union in the state of Rhode Island.

I am writing to you today in **support of H-7352** to protect the rights of our people both at work and home.

This legislation does not create any new rights. It simply restores a remedy when a person's rights under the Rhode Island or United States Constitution are violated. As the law currently stands, many constitutional rights exist without a meaningful way to enforce them. A right without a remedy is not truly a right.

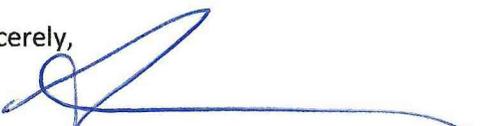
This bill also provides protection against unconstitutional actions by any governmental entity—state or federal—operating within Rhode Island. It safeguards fundamental rights including free speech, freedom of association, access to information, labor organizing, and protection from unreasonable searches and seizures.

Importantly, the bill preserves all existing immunities, including qualified immunity. Government employees remain fully indemnified under current Rhode Island law. The legislation was carefully drafted to ensure accountability while protecting law enforcement and public servants acting within the law.

Twenty-three states already provide a civil remedy for violations of state constitutional rights. Rhode Island should do the same.

In conclusion, providing a remedy promotes accountability. Accountability deters misconduct. And deterrence protects both the public and those who serve it honorably. I respectfully request that you give sincere consideration to the passage of H-7352.

Sincerely,


Joseph L. Walsh, Jr. / Business Manager
cc: Paul Macdonald / IBEW Local 99 Lobbyist
Committee Members
Roberta DiMezza / Committee Clerk