



*Distinctive Communities
Powerful Alliance*

March 4, 2026

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

RE: HOUSE BILL 7352 – AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT--THE RHODE ISLAND CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT ACT

Dear Chair McEntee and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write to express our strong concerns with House Bill 7352. While we recognize the importance of ensuring that constitutional rights are protected and enforced in Rhode Island, the bill, as currently drafted, raises significant concerns that merit further discussion.

One of the primary concerns is the broad scope of potential liability for municipalities and other local entities. The bill allows actions to be brought for any alleged deprivation or violation of rights secured by the Rhode Island Constitution or federal law, including by and against municipal or quasi-municipal entities. This expansive definition of aggrieved parties, combined with the wide range of remedies available, could lead to an unpredictable and potentially excessive volume of litigation. Such outcomes may place significant financial and administrative strain on cities and towns across the state.

Additionally, the bill does not appear to preserve traditional defenses for public entities or employees, which could further increase the risk of costly and protracted legal action. Without safeguards such as qualified immunity, municipalities and their officials may face heightened exposure to lawsuits, which could impact the delivery of essential services and the ability of public officials to perform their duties effectively.

Given these concerns, we respectfully request the opportunity to work with the sponsor to refine the language in House Bill 7352. Our goal is to ensure the bill achieves its intended purpose of protecting rights while also maintaining fairness in the legal process and mitigating unintended consequences for Rhode Island's cities and towns. We welcome a discussion on possible amendments to clarify the scope of the bill and to provide reasonable protections for municipal entities and their employees.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this important matter and welcome the opportunity to work with the General Assembly on solutions that protect both public access and municipal interests.

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