



RHODE ISLAND BROTHERHOOD OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

"Representing Those Who Work the Toughest Beat in the State"

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March 24, 2026

Chairman and Members
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, Rhode Island

Re: Opposition to House Bill 8115 – Corrections Department / Body Camera Policy Framework

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers, I write to express our strong opposition to House Bill 8115.

At first glance, this bill is presented as a directive to develop policy. In reality, it establishes a framework that presumes the implementation of body cameras within correctional facilities before the full impact of such a system has been properly evaluated, debated, or negotiated.

This is not a neutral policy bill; it is a backdoor approach to a significant operational change.

Predetermining Outcome Without Full Debate

By requiring the development of comprehensive policies governing activation, recording, storage, access, and training, this legislation effectively locks in the structure of a body camera system before key questions are answered, including:

- Total cost of implementation and long-term data storage
- Operational impact on staff in a correctional environment
- Legal exposure and discoverability of recorded footage
- Privacy implications for staff and sensitive interactions

The system is being built before the decision has been fully vetted.

Undermining the Collective Bargaining Process

While the bill includes language referencing collective bargaining agreements, it simultaneously establishes expectations and parameters that will shape and limit that bargaining process.

The use of body cameras is a mandatory subject of bargaining. It is not appropriate to legislate the framework of such a system in advance while claiming that bargaining rights remain intact.

You cannot preserve the process while pre-determining the outcome.

Expanding External Influence Over Internal Operations

This bill requires consultation with outside organizations, including advocacy groups and entities that do not operate correctional facilities or bear responsibility for maintaining safety and order within them.

Correctional operations are complex, high-risk environments that require decisions grounded in operational expertise and real-world experience.

Policy affecting the safety of correctional officers should not be driven by those who do not work inside these facilities.

Vague Standards That Will Expand Over Time

The bill relies on undefined terms such as “critical incidents” to guide recording requirements.

In practice, such terms expand over time, leading to broader application than originally intended and increasing both operational burden and liability.

What begins as limited use inevitably becomes routine use.

False Expectation of a “Complete Record”

The bill references the creation of a “complete and accurate record” of incidents.

This is a fundamentally flawed assumption.

Body cameras capture a single angle, a limited perspective, and often an incomplete picture of dynamic and rapidly evolving situations.

A camera records a view, not the full reality.

Building policy on the assumption that it provides a complete account creates serious risk of misinterpretation and unjust outcomes.

Increased Legal and Administrative Exposure

The creation of large volumes of recorded footage will significantly increase:

- Litigation and discovery demands
- Administrative burdens
- The risk of selective or out-of-context use of recordings

This shifts focus away from safety and toward compliance and documentation.

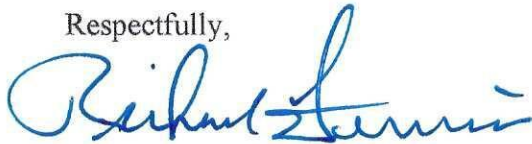
This bill moves the state toward implementing a body camera system without fully addressing cost, operational impact, legal risk, or the rights of the workforce expected to operate under it.

If such a system is to be considered, it must be done through a deliberate, transparent, and negotiated process, not pre-structured in statute. This bill doesn't ask whether this system makes sense, it assumes it does and builds it anyway."

For these reasons, the Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers respectfully urges the Committee to reject House Bill 8115.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Ferruccio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "F".

Richard Ferruccio

President

Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers