



# 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 8116 – Body Cameras for Correctional Facilities Act

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 8116.

Let me be clear at the outset, this is not an argument against accountability, transparency, or professionalism. Our members operate every day in a system that is already heavily monitored, and we support reasonable measures that improve safety for both staff and those in custody.

However, this legislation raises serious concerns in several critical areas:

## 1. Significant Cost with Minimal Added Value

The Department of Corrections already utilizes an extensive fixed camera system throughout its facilities. The addition of body cameras would be largely redundant.

More importantly, while the devices themselves are often marketed as affordable, the long-term cost lies in data storage, management, and retrieval, which can escalate into millions of dollars over time through vendor-controlled systems.

At a time when critical infrastructure issues, such as the ventilation system failures at the medium facility, have already resulted in significant taxpayer expense, it is difficult to justify diverting resources toward a system that duplicates existing capabilities.

## 2. Collective Bargaining Concerns

The use of body cameras is a mandatory subject of bargaining between the State and the Brotherhood.

This legislation would effectively impose working conditions unilaterally, bypassing the collective bargaining process and undermining established labor law principles.

### 3. Staff Safety and Operational Concerns

Correctional facilities are unique environments. Staff are required to respond quickly, often in close quarters, and in unpredictable situations.

The requirement for constant activation and strict compliance, combined with disciplinary consequences, creates hesitation and second-guessing in moments where decisive action is critical.

### 4. Serious Privacy Implications

This bill does not adequately address the realities of correctional environments, including:

- Locker rooms
- Staff changing areas
- Bathroom access points
- Sensitive medical interactions

Without clear and enforceable safeguards, this creates a significant invasion of privacy for staff, and exposes the Department to potential liability.

### 5. Expansion of External Oversight Without Balance

The creation of an external oversight board with broad authority raises concerns regarding:

- Lack of operational correctional experience
- Potential bias
- Duplication of existing investigative and oversight mechanisms

This legislation imposes significant costs, duplicates existing systems, undermines collective bargaining rights, and introduces serious operational and privacy concerns, all without demonstrating a clear benefit to safety or efficiency.

The Brotherhood respectfully urges the Committee to reject House Bill 8116.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Richard Ferruccio  
President  
Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers