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April 28, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903
HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov

RE: Support for H. 8082

Dear Chairwoman McEntee and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association, I write in support of H. 8082, legislation relating to the expungement of criminal records.

This bill makes important and necessary updates to Rhode Island's expungement statutes to ensure consistency with existing law, particularly as it relates to driving under the influence offenses. By aligning expungement eligibility with a ten-year lookback period for DUI-related offenses, the legislation appropriately recognizes the serious public safety risks associated with impaired driving.

From a law enforcement perspective, maintaining accurate and accessible records for a meaningful period of time is critical. DUI offenses are not isolated incidents—they often reflect patterns of behavior that, if left unaddressed, can lead to serious injury or loss of life. Ensuring that these offenses remain on record for an appropriate duration supports informed decision-making by courts, prosecutors, and law enforcement officers.

At the same time, this legislation preserves the integrity of Rhode Island's expungement framework by continuing to allow individuals who demonstrate rehabilitation and good moral character to seek relief, while appropriately excluding certain serious offenses and maintaining safeguards for public safety.

Additionally, the bill provides clarity around eligibility for individuals with multiple misdemeanor convictions and reinforces consistent standards for courts when evaluating expungement requests. These updates help ensure fairness, transparency, and uniform application of the law.

H. 8082 strikes an appropriate balance between second chances and public safety. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

Chief Sidney Wordell (ret.)
Executive Director
Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association