



RHODE ISLAND BROTHERHOOD OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

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

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April 30, 2026

To: Madame Chairwoman Carol Hagan McEntee and Members
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly

RE: Strong Support for H 8463 – Resisting Directive of Correctional Officer

Dear Chair, McEntee and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers, I write in strong support of H 8463, which would make it unlawful for any person in the custody of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections to use force or a weapon to resist a lawful request or directive by a Correctional Officer.

This legislation addresses a serious and longstanding gap in protection for the men and women who work inside our correctional facilities every day.

Correctional Officers are responsible for maintaining order in one of the most dangerous work environments in public service. Every day, officers are required to intervene in fights, assaults, medical emergencies, disturbances, cell extractions, and violent confrontations involving individuals already in custody. Unlike street policing, these officers work inside confined environments where there is no ability to simply disengage or walk away. They must restore order immediately.

Current law appropriately protects peace officers from individuals resisting arrest through force or weapons. This bill recognizes that the same principle must apply inside correctional institutions when inmates use force to resist lawful directives from correctional staff.

When an inmate refuses lawful orders and uses force against staff, whether during movement, medical transport, discipline, housing placement, or emergency intervention, that is not simple noncompliance. It is a direct threat to officer safety, inmate safety, and institutional security.

This bill does not criminalize ordinary disciplinary issues. It specifically addresses the use of force or weapons to resist lawful correctional officer directives. It provides an important legal tool to reinforce accountability, deter violence, and support safe facility operations.

At a time when correctional officers are already facing increased assaults, rising violence, staffing shortages, and growing institutional instability, strengthening protections for frontline staff is not optional, it is necessary.

Our officers are asked to maintain order under extremely difficult circumstances. They deserve the legal protection necessary to perform that duty safely.

For these reasons, RIBCO strongly urges passage of H 8463.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Ferruccio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Ferruccio".

Richard Ferruccio

President

Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers