



March 5, 2025

The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese, Chair

House Committee on Labor

Rhode Island Statehouse

Providence RI, 02903

**RE: Testimony In Support of House Bill No. 5679: An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations –  
Payment of Wages**

On behalf of United Way of Rhode Island, we express our support for Bill Number 5679, which aligns with our commitment to ensuring that all Rhode Islanders have access to economic opportunity and financial stability. Through the LIFT UNITED initiative of our LIVE UNITED 2025 Strategic Plan, we work to remove barriers to financial security, support workforce development, and strengthen pathways to upward mobility. Equity is at the heart of our mission, ensuring historically marginalized communities have the resources to thrive.

Bill Number 5679 represents an opportunity to expand economic opportunity, enhance financial literacy, and provide essential supports that empower individuals and families to achieve long-term stability and greater socioeconomic mobility.

Wage transparency is essential to protecting workers and ensuring they receive the full compensation they have earned. House Bill No. 5679 would require employers to provide detailed pay stubs explaining wage calculations and deductions, increasing transparency in payroll practices and preventing wage theft. According to the Economic Progress Institute's 2023 Rhode Island Standard of Need report, a single adult in Rhode Island must earn at least \$44,164 annually (\$21.23 per hour) to meet basic living expenses—yet many workers, particularly those in lower-wage industries, struggle to reach this threshold due to payroll inconsistencies, improper deductions, and lack of clear wage documentation (Economic Progress Institute, 2023). By mandating detailed wage reporting, this bill ensures that workers are fairly compensated and fully aware of their earnings, allowing them to budget effectively and plan for financial stability.

Additionally, pay transparency laws have been shown to reduce wage theft and payroll errors, particularly among low-income workers. When workers are given clear documentation of their wages,

[Uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders.](#)

they can more effectively identify discrepancies and hold employers accountable. With the cost of living steadily increasing in Rhode Island, it is critical to provide workers with the tools they need to ensure financial security and protect against unfair labor practices.

Financial stability should not be a privilege—it is a necessity. By supporting Bill Number 5679, Rhode Island can continue making strides toward economic mobility for all. This investment will ensure families can access the resources they need to thrive, reducing long-term reliance on emergency assistance and strengthening our local economy. We urge you to support this measure and stand with us in our commitment to creating a more equitable and financially secure Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

Elijah McLean

Manager, Government Relations & Policy

United Way Rhode Island