



March 18, 2026

The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese, Chairman
House Labor Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H.7961, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Payment of Wages

Dear Chairman Corvese,

The undersigned members of the Rhode Island Business Coalition would like to express our opposition to H.7961, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Payment of Wages.

H.7961 creates contractor liability for any unpaid wages, benefits, holiday pay or sick pay due to employees of subcontractors or to third-parties. An employee can choose to file a civil complaint or to file a complaint with the Department of Labor to gain relief. If the employee chooses the civil complaint route, that employee can be represented by another person, an organization or collective bargaining agent. If an employee files a wage action against a subcontractor, the contractor is jointly and severally liable for the actions of the subcontractor.

Put simply, H.7961 would require the contractor to pay twice if the contractor paid the subcontractor prior to the employee filing against a subcontractor for nonpayment. Under this scenario, the contractor would also be liable for fines and penalties levied against the subcontractor. This is simply unjust. The doctrine of joint and several liability originated from the concept that “the act of one is the act of all.” If the contractor has paid the subcontractor and the subcontractor fails to pay employees then the act of the subcontractor was not “the act of all” and should not be treated as such.

For those reasons, the members of the Coalition oppose the passage of H.7961 and urge this committee to take no action.

Sincerely,

David Chenevert, Chairman, Rhode Island Business Coalition

[The Rhode Island Business Coalition](#) represents 50 industries and 6,280 businesses that employ 231,200 people throughout Rhode Island.

Associated Builders and Contractors – Rhode Island Chapter

National Federation of Independent Business

Propane Gas Association of New England

Rhode Island Staffing Association

Rhode Island Small Business Economic Summit Regulations Subcommittee

Rhode Island Small Business Summit Tax and Budget Committee

cc. House Labor Committee members