



Department of Public Safety, Police Department
"Building Pride in Providence"

April 15, 2026

The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese, Chair
House Labor Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chair Corvese and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 7040, *An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Municipal Police Arbitration*. If enacted, this legislation would mandate contract continuation for police officers, undermining the ability to negotiate fair and equitable collective bargaining agreements with police unions.

The expiration dates of collective bargaining agreements are essential for ensuring a structured pathway to future agreements. Imposing automatic contract continuation limits our ability to negotiate in the best interests of the communities we serve.

Historically, when negotiations extend beyond a contract's expiration date, the City of Providence and the Police Union have mutually agreed to continue contractual provisions, an established best practice already codified for certain collective bargaining groups, such as firefighters and EMS professionals through a 2017 amendment. This approach allows for continuity while preserving the ability to reach a balanced agreement. There is no need to mandate indefinite contract continuation when existing laws provide a framework for negotiations and dispute resolution.

The Providence Police Department maintains a strong and collaborative relationship with all stakeholders involved in contract negotiations and remains committed to supporting good-faith labor discussions. Contract discussions often take time, and we support a mutually agreed upon temporary contract continuation. However, this bill goes too far by imposing automatic and indefinite contract continuation, which would ultimately constrain the ability to manage resources effectively on behalf of taxpayers.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to oppose House Bill 7040.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Oscar L. Perez".

Oscar L. Perez
Colonel
Chief of Police