



Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.
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April 14, 2026

Hon. Arthur Corvese
Chairman, House Committee on Labor
State House
Providence, RI 02903
rep-corvese@rilegislature.gov

Re: Support for H-7958; An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations—Fair Employment Practices

Dear Chairman Corvese,

As Business Manager of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 99, I represent over 1000 men and women who provide their skills through our vast network of signatory contractors in the Electrical Industry in the State of Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. I also serve as one, if not the only, voice of the men and women who are not yet fortunate enough to be represented by an electrical labor union in the state of Rhode Island.

I write in strong **support for H-7958**, which requires prevailing wage compliance on construction projects at healthcare facilities.

Rhode Island's healthcare institutions benefit from significant public support, including Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements, tax-exempt status, and publicly financed grants. It is only appropriate that these publicly supported projects meet strong labor standards that ensure accountability and maximize the return on public investment. Prevailing wage requirements help keep taxpayer dollars circulating within the local economy by supporting our local's workers and contractors.

Prevailing wage standards, via the Davis Bacon act were created to assure all contractors hired the most qualified workers to perform public work. As mentioned above, health care facilities benefit greatly from public funding and should always have been mandated to perform their projects utilizing prevailing wages. In no small part, health care benefits are a critical part of the prevailing wage statute.

By expanding access to employer-provided healthcare benefits for construction workers, it helps strengthen Rhode Island's privately insured population while ensuring that those building our healthcare infrastructure have access to care themselves. Our union, through our health and welfare funds, account \$15,000,000 in healthcare expenses annually at our local area hospital and healthcare institutions. We are reinvesting back into the community.

In conclusion, for the reasons mentioned above, we respectfully urge you to **support H-7958**. Doing so will protect workers, improve project outcomes, strengthen our local economy, and ensure that Rhode Island's healthcare facilities are built to serve our communities safely and effectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Joseph L. Walsh, Jr / Business Manager
cc:
Jimmy DeCastro / Committee Clerk
Committee Members
Paul MacDonald / IBEW Local 99 Lobbyist
BuildRI
RI AFL-CIO