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April 15, 2026

EMAIL ONLY

Hon. Arthur J. Corvese
Chairperson, House Labor Committee
Email: rep-corvese@rilegislature.gov

RE: SUPPORT FOR H 7958 *AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES*

Dear Chairman Corvese:

This letter is sent by the undersigned in my capacity as Governmental Affairs Counsel for the New England Mechanical Contractors Association (“New England MCA”).¹ New England MCA **supports** this bill, *which would mandate that any contract for capital improvements at any healthcare facility adhere to the requirements of chapter 13 of title 37.*

Members of New England MCA are signatories to one or more collective bargaining agreements that not only provide for the payment of but are primarily responsible for setting prevailing wages. Accordingly, members of the New England MCA pay prevailing wages on public works projects pursuant to contractual obligations as well as applicable law. Prevailing wage law, as first established by the federal government, was designed to create a safe, well trained, and stable middle class construction work force. It did so by ensuring that the wage and benefit package for such employment was sufficient to attract and retain trained and capable trades men and women in the construction trades by mandating the payment of a “living wage” on all federal public works projects. For the same policy reasons, this state, long ago, mandated the payment of prevailing wages on both state and municipal public works.

Insofar as members of the New England MCA are bound by contract to pay prevailing wages, exceptions to prevailing wage unfairly tilt the playing field in favor of and reward those contractors who do not pay a “living wage.” This legislation helps level the playing field by preventing a “race to the bottom,” where healthcare institutions select subcontractors based solely on the lowest cost rather than quality, safety, and workforce standards. **Focusing on best value.**

Moreover, projects performed under prevailing wage standards are typically completed more safely, with higher quality workmanship and fewer delays. This ensures healthcare facilities are delivered on time—and often more efficiently, so they can return to serving patients and the public as quickly as possible. Work completed under prevailing wage standards is consistently associated with safer job sites, higher-quality construction, and fewer delays, resulting in projects that are completed on schedule and perform better long-term.

¹ New England MCA represents union signatory commercial and industrial heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and process piping contractors in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. It has over 80 contractor members throughout New England. New England MCA’s Rhode Island members include Aero Mechanical, Inc., Arden Engineering Constructors, LLC, Delta Mechanical, Hart Engineering Corporation, and Nexgen Mechanical. Every New England MCA member is signatory to one or more collective bargaining agreements with the local construction industry trades. Our members have worked as contractors and subcontractors on numerous public and private works projects in Rhode Island, including major construction at URI, Rhode Island Resource Recovery, Providence College, and Amgen. During periods of major commercial construction, New England MCA member contractors may employ as many as 700 Local 51 plumbers and pipefitters in Rhode Island. *The views expressed in this letter do not necessarily represent the position of each individual member.*

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Public dollars should prioritize **local contractors and local workers**, ensuring that investments in healthcare facilities benefit Rhode Island's economy. Prevailing wage requirements increase participation from local contractors, strengthening Rhode Island's small business community. This ensures that taxpayer dollars are **reinvested locally**, supporting both businesses and workers across the state.

For all the foregoing reasons, New England MCA strongly **supports** passage of this legislation..

Very truly yours,



Richard A. Sinapi, ras@sinapilaw.com

RAS/ras

cc: Client (email only)
Hon. K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker of the House (via email only(rep-shekarchi@rilegislature.gov))
Members of House Committee on Labor (via email only HouseLabor@rilegislature.gov)