



Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.
Business Manager

Wayne A. Tait
President

22 Amflex Drive
Cranston, RI 02921
P: (401) 946-9900
F: (401) 946-9907
www.IBEW99.org

February 16, 2022

Honorable Representative Raymond Hull
Committee Chairman
House Committee Municipal Government and Housing
HouseMunicipalGovernmentandHousing@rilegislature.gov
State House
Providence, RI

RE: SUPPORT OF H-6676 AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- LEVY AND ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL TAXES

Dear Chairman Hull,

As Business Manager of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 99, I represent 800 Women and Men who provide their skills for our now seventy-three signatory contractors in the Electrical Industry in the State of Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. We are also more often than not, one of the very few or even the only voice for the unrepresented professional electricians in the state of Rhode Island. Fairness and equity is often our battle cry and the issue on the table today falls clearly in that category.

On behalf of all the people I represent, I urge **passage of H-6676.**

There is not a single person reading this that cannot appreciate the fact that having some level of predictability in their lives is critical. It is critical for careers, relationships, and investments. As the world sinks deeper into a climate crisis, there are those who have risen up to find solutions. Being biased, I would say that the most important people are the men and women professional electricians that have restructured their careers to meet these important goals. Of course, equally as important are the investors, developers, and contractors who have also restructured their business models to work in concert with the skilled labor to preserve the world we know for their grandchildren's grandchildren.

All of these people rely on some level of predictability to plan their lives. The worker tries to predict when they will be able to earn a paycheck to feed their families, the investor tries to predict what the return will be on their investment, and the developers and contractors try to predict if they can perform this critical work and still keep the lights on. Anything that unreasonably changes that vision unnecessarily destabilizes every single person in the chain. Investors move their funds elsewhere, developers move to other states who understand this situation better, contractors fight for scraps on other projects after they re-tool their entire operation, and the women and men who build this earth are sent to the curb when projects are no longer viable.

Most cities and towns enter into PILOT agreements that offer mutually beneficial stability to the municipality, the taxpayer, the investor, the developer, the contractor, and the worker. To continue to allow unreasonable tax increases that are not based on impact is detrimental to the overall vision of a

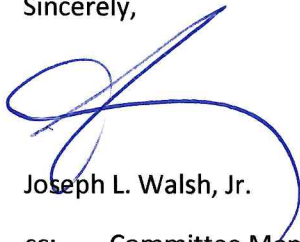
renewable world. That would apply regardless of what the land is used for, but for this conversation we are focused on renewable projects.

Solar installations are financially the municipality's best friend. An entity who, for the most part, requires no police response, no fire department support, no ambulance service, no trash pickup, no plowing, no traffic control, no schools but still pay significant tax revenue into the town. As a neighbor to the citizenry, after construction there is no additional traffic, no noise, no complex neighbor relationships and the comfort of knowing that for the useful life of the system, you will not have a condominium complex stuffed in the next yard.

In order to keep all of this momentum going and continue to meet our renewable energy goals, we must make development financially predictable or it will not exist. Without that commitment, the municipality is doing a financial disservice to the taxpayer, the men and women who engage in the work, and ultimately a disservice to the world we call home.

In conclusion, on behalf of the men and women I speak for, I urge passage of H-6676.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.

cc: Committee Members
RI AFL-CIO
Paul Macdonald / IBEW Local 99 Lobbyist
Rhode Island and Construction Trades Council
BuildRI