

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5695 – AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- LEVY AND ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL TAXES

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 5695, which would permit municipalities to enact ordinances allowing them to organize local tax amnesty events once every three years. This legislation provides cities and towns with an important tool to enhance tax collection efforts while offering taxpayers an opportunity to settle outstanding liabilities.

H-5695 benefits municipalities by increasing the likelihood of recovering delinquent taxes, thereby strengthening local revenues and ensuring communities have the necessary resources to fund essential services. Tax amnesty programs have been effective in many jurisdictions by encouraging voluntary compliance, reducing administrative burdens associated with long-term collection efforts, and ultimately improving financial stability at the local level.

By granting municipalities the authority to establish these events, H-5695 supports local governments in their efforts to manage budgets more effectively, minimize revenue losses, and promote fairness in tax collection. Additionally, structured amnesty programs provide taxpayers with a clear, limited-time opportunity to fulfill their obligations without incurring excessive penalties, fostering goodwill between local governments and their residents.

We commend the sponsors of this legislation for recognizing the importance of equipping municipalities with tools to improve financial sustainability. The League stands ready to assist throughout the process of advancing this legislation and ensuring that cities and towns have the necessary flexibility to implement effective tax amnesty initiatives.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important measure. We appreciate your leadership in strengthening Rhode Island's cities and towns, and we look forward to working with you to advance H-5695.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing