

April 22, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey
Chair, House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: 2025 H-6043- AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- LEVY AND ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL TAXES

Dear Chair Casey:

The Division of Municipal Finance (“DMF”) writes to provide information that may be of assistance to the Committee as it considers House Bill 6043, An Act Relating to Taxation-Levy and Assessment of Local Taxes. This letter is not intended as a position in support of or opposition to the bill, but only as recommendations on drafting to provide clarity in the bill and to aid municipal tax administration.

As you know, this bill would amend several sections of Chapter 44-5 of the General Laws, entitled “Levy and Assessment of Local Taxes,” to, as set forth in the Explanation by the Legislative Council, “make certain technical amendments/clarifications to the statutes relating to the assessment of real property and the timing and process to appeals thereof.” The bill is set to be effective upon passage; provided, however, its provisions shall only “apply to tax year 2026 (i.e. valuations as of December 31, 2025) and thereafter.”

The DMF seeks clarity with respect to the following proposed provisions to assist the DMF in fulfilling its limited statutory role in the municipal assessment appeal process:

- Proposed § 44-5-26(e) includes a reference to the “global extension granted pursuant to § 44-5-26(d). . . .” However, the authority to grant the proposed global extension is included in proposed § 44-5-26(h). The DMF respectfully suggests this provision be redrafted to properly reference the appropriate subsection.
- The provisions of the bill are intended to apply to tax year 2026 (i.e. valuations as of December 31, 2025) and thereafter. While this language is compatible with the tax calendars of the vast majority of municipalities, it creates ambiguity with respect to the unique tax calendars of the Town of Cumberland and the City of East Providence. The DMF respectfully suggests that the effective date be clarified to specify that the provisions of the bill apply to assessment dates on and after December 31, 2025 to avoid any potential ambiguity in administration.

The DMF takes no position with respect to the remainder of the proposed legislation. Rather, the DMF is concerned solely with the issues of clarity and municipal tax administration.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stephen E. Coleman Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

Stephen E. Coleman Jr.
Chief

Cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Municipal Government and
Housing
The Honorable Alex S. Finkelman
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker
Thomas A. Verdi, Director, Department of Revenue