



Mayor of Providence

Brett P. Smiley

April 22, 2025

Chairman Steve Casey
House Municipal Government Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence RI, 02903

Dear Chairman Casey and Honorable members of the committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for **House Bill 6162, AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- LEVY AND ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL TAXES**. If enacted, this legislation would grant the City of Providence a one-year levy cap of up to eight percent (8%) for fiscal year 2026.

As many of you are aware, the City of Providence and the Providence Public School District recently reached a resolution in a long-standing funding dispute, resulting in a \$15 million settlement with the Rhode Island Department of Education. While this agreement marks a critical step forward for our schools and our community, it has placed a significant financial strain on the city's budget. House Bill 6162 would provide us with the necessary flexibility to absorb this cost while preserving essential city services and avoiding severe cuts to departments that are vital to maintaining the quality of life that all Providence residents deserve.

In addition to this proposed measure, it's important to note that the City has will not rely solely on a property tax increase to address our budget shortfall. Over the past several months, we conducted a comprehensive review of city fines, fees, and expenditures. As part of my budget proposal released last week, we identified nearly \$9 million in expense reductions, including the elimination of over 23 positions and the suspension of cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for city employees earning over \$100,000.

House Bill 6162 is essential to ensuring the City of Providence can pass a balanced, fiscally responsible budget that begins to address decades of underinvestment in our public schools without jeopardizing core city services. Should this legislation fail to pass, the city would be forced to enact even more drastic cuts, negatively impacting services and personnel across all departments.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support and vote in favor of House Bill 6162.

Sincerely,


Brett P. Smiley
Mayor