

TOWN OF BURRILLVILLE

Office of Town Clerk
Email: townclerk@burrillville.org



Phone: 401-568-4300, ext. 133
Fax: 401-568-0490
RI Relay 1-800-745-5555 (TTY)

March 30, 2026

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
RI General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

VIA email to: HouseMunicipalGovernmentandHousing@rilegislature.gov

Dear Representative Casey and Committee Members,

At their meeting of Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at which time a quorum was present and acting throughout, the Burrillville Town Council voted to adopt a resolution requesting amendments to legislation introduced on behalf of the Town of Burrillville. House Bill 2026 – H 8028 would establish the Wilson's Reservoir Dam Management District. The attached resolution requests amendments to that bill to include immunity from civil liability.

Further, the members of the Wilson's Reservoir Association have requested that passage of this legislation be expedited as quickly as possible. They hope to have the dam management district established by their annual meeting in June 2026. They are anticipating some very important budgetary votes and want to be sure those votes are enforceable. They have also been unable to get liability insurance for their board members because they are not a dam management district.

Also enclosed, please find a letter of support from our solicitor, William C. Dimitri. We appreciate your support on this. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen N. Rawson".

Stephen N. Rawson, Vice President
Burrillville Town Council

C: Representative David Place
Representative Brian Newberry
Senator Jessica de la Cruz

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**Burrillville Town Council
Resolution No 26-08
in Support of House Bill 2026 – H 8028
and Requesting Amendments to Add
Immunity From Civil Liability**

WHEREAS, at the regular meeting of the Burrillville Town Council held on Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at 7:00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Building, and at which time a quorum was present and acting throughout, the Town Council supported amendments to Title 45, Chapter 62, Dam Management Districts that would 1) allow the Town of Burrillville to exempt from taxation certain property owned by a dam management district and 2) provide for the collection of dam management district fees; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 2026 – H 8028, An Act Relating to Cities and Towns – Dam Management Districts, introduced on February 27, 2026, would amend the Dam Management Districts statute as supported by the Burrillville Town Council; and

WHEREAS, The Burrillville Town Council further wishes to include language to House Bill 2026 – H 8028 amending §45-62-5.1. *Immunity from civil liability* to add Wilson's Reservoir Dam Management District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville respectfully request to amend House Bill 2026 – H 8028 to add the following:

§ 45-62-5.1. Immunity from civil liability.

(a) Pascoag Reservoir Dam Management District created pursuant to this chapter shall be immune from civil liability for any tort committed upon any lake bed the Pascoag Reservoir Dam Management District may acquire, hold, use or lease pursuant to § 45-62-3.

(b) Wilson's Reservoir Dam Management District created pursuant to this chapter shall be immune from civil liability for any tort committed upon any lake bed the Wilson's Reservoir Dam Management District may acquire, hold, use or lease pursuant to § 45-62-3.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we, the Town Council of the Town of Burrillville respectfully requests that legislation be introduced to the Rhode Island Senate that would mirror House Bill 2026 – H 8028 as amended, amending §45-62. – Dam Management Districts.

Adopted this 25th day of March 2026.

ATTEST: Vicki Martin
Vicki Martin, Town Clerk

Stephen N. Rawson
Stephen N. Rawson, Vice President
Burrillville Town Council

William C. Dimitri & Associates

462 BROADWAY, PROVIDENCE, RI 02909



DIMITRILAW.COM

T: 401-273-9092

WILLIAM C. DIMITRI, ESQ

AMY E. VERI, ESQ*

ANDREW R. DIMITRI, ESQ**

FAX: 401-331-1898

BILL@DIMITRILAW.COM

AMY@DIMITRILAW.COM

ANDREW@DIMITRILAW.COM

March 25, 2026

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Representative Casey and Committee Members;

I am writing in strong support of the Burrillville Town Council's adoption of Resolution No. 26-08 and, in particular, its request to amend House Bill 2026 – H 8028 to include the Wilson's Reservoir Dam Management District within the statutory immunity provisions of Rhode Island General Laws §45-62-5.1.

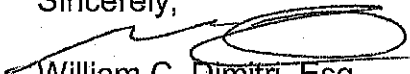
As outlined in the Town Council's action of March 25, 2026, the proposed amendments to the Dam Management Districts statute are essential to ensuring that dam management districts can operate responsibly, effectively, and in alignment with the purposes of Chapter 62. House Bill 2026 – H 8028 already advances important updates supported by the Town of Burrillville, including tax exemptions for district-owned property and the collection of district fees. The Town Council further recognizes that extending immunity from civil liability to the Wilson's Reservoir Dam Management District is both necessary and consistent with the existing statutory language that already provides such protections to the Pascoag Reservoir Dam Management District.

Adding subsection (b) to §45-62-5.1, explicitly granting immunity from civil liability for torts committed upon any lakebed that the Wilson's Reservoir Dam Management District may acquire, hold, use, or lease, ensures parity, fairness, and operational clarity. This amendment will allow the district to carry out its duties without exposure to undue liability, thereby safeguarding the community's long-term interests in maintaining vital dam and reservoir infrastructure.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the inclusion of the proposed language in House Bill 2026 – H 8028 and support the introduction of corresponding legislation in the Rhode Island Senate to mirror these amendments.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued support of the statutory framework that enables responsible dam management throughout the State of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,



William C. Dimitri, Esq.
Solicitor, Town of Burrillville