



Juan M. Pichardo

Council President Pro Tempore

Committee Health, Opportunity, Prosperity and Education, Chair

Commission on Veterans Affairs, Chair

Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning, Vice-Chair

Rules Committee, Member

Councilor – Ward 9

May 12, 2026

The Honorable Karen Alzate

Chair, Committee on Special Legislation

Rhode Island House of Representatives

82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

Chair Alzate and Honorable Committee Members,

The Dominican-American community in Rhode Island, of which we are proudly members, is the largest Latino ethnic community in the state, constituting nearly 30% of all Latino Rhode Islanders. Dominican-Americans are entrepreneurs, educators, healthcare workers, civil servants, and veterans. Rhode Island is also home to the first Dominican-American elected to state senatorial office in American history, the first Dominican-American woman elected to state representative office in American history, and the first Dominican-American to serve as lieutenant governor of a state. In sum, Dominican-Americans are Americans, proudly so, and contributors to the culture, economy, and civic life of Rhode Island. Accordingly, we write to you to strongly support House Bill H-8333 and the Dominican Independence Heritage Award Committee special license plate it would create.

If enacted, H-8333 would create the first Dominican-themed license plate in the United States, displaying the Dominican seal and heritage on behalf of the Dominican Independence Heritage Award Committee. This plate, like other heritage organization plates, represents the diversity and unity contained in American identity; all Americans are one people from many, having joined and contributed to our shared home in hope, worked with diligence and endeavor, striven for justice and equity, and established it as our home while retaining the best of our heritages and backgrounds. This plate, aside from displaying pride in Dominican heritage and in American identity, would also have a charitable purpose. A portion of the fees generated from these plates will support the Dominican Independence Heritage Award Committee, which be required to use those funds for the benefit of Rhode Island-based charitable organizations. Among the efforts sustained by those funds will be La Casa Dominicana, the Dominican Home, a cultural and community center rooting the community for posterity. Through those funds, the plates will support both Dominican-American heritage and culture as well as other nonprofits, strengthening the civic and cultural bonds that all Rhode Islanders share.

We believe all Rhode Islanders should take pride in the wealth of culture and community that makes our state our shared and nurturing home. Dominican-Americans are equally contributors to that wealth, and our heritage is also that of Rhode Island. For those reasons and those aforementioned, we urge you to strongly support House Bill H-8333.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Juan M. Pichardo", written over a horizontal line.

Juan M. Pichardo
Council President Pro Tempore
Councilman – Ward 9

Providence City Council

Providence City Hall, 25 Dorrance Street, Providence, RI 02903