



State of Rhode Island

**Department of State | Office of the Secretary of State**

**Gregg M. Amore, Secretary of State**

March 7, 2024

Honorable Evan P. Shanley, Chair  
House Committee on State Government and Elections

RE: In support of H7473 – An Act Relating to Public Records – Public Records Administration

Dear Chair Shanley,

I write this letter in support of House Bill 7473, legislation that will modernize the Public Records Administration laws by using current terminology and best practices that appropriately reflect the roles and functions of the Public Records Administrator.

As Secretary of State, my top priority has been making government more accessible and transparent for all Rhode Islanders, which subsequently supports civic engagement. The State Archives and Public Records Administration is an indispensable tool for upholding transparency in government—it safeguards Rhode Island's historical assets and permanent records of daily transactional state government operations.

This proposed legislation will augment these values of access and transparency by enhancing collaboration between state and municipal entities under the public records program, remaining current with constantly evolving industry standards, and updating several definitions that clarify and better reflect the function of records management. Additionally, this legislation clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the Public Records Administrator, state agencies, and public bodies in the creation and maintenance of public records.

Furthermore, this legislation will improve the process for creating and updating records retention schedules based on their legal, historical, and fiscal value and the process for legally destroying records. In tandem, this bill establishes a mechanism to transfer records with retentions exceeding twenty years that exhibit historical value to the State Archives for storage once retention periods have been met.

I urge this committee to support House Bill 7473, as it will ensure that our Office can respond to the needs of the state and public by aligning current industry best practices to enhance records administration across state and municipal government to ensure government information remains accessible and transparent to the public.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michelle Arias, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, at [marias@sos.ri.gov](mailto:marias@sos.ri.gov).

Sincerely,

Gregg M. Amore  
Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections  
The Honorable Jose Batista

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