



**RHODE ISLAND LEAGUE
OF CITIES AND TOWNS**

*Distinctive Communities
Powerful Alliance*

March 6, 2025

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair
House Finance Committee
Rhode Island House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5054 – RELATING TO PUBLIC PROPERTY AND WORKS -- MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns (the League), I am writing to express our support for the concept of the proposed act requiring municipalities to budget for maintenance costs for newly constructed buildings. We understand the intent behind this legislation is to ensure long-term sustainability and to ensure that buildings remain in good repair. However, we must express our concerns regarding the potential financial burden this unfunded mandate could place on our member cities and towns.

As you know, Rhode Island's municipalities already operate within extremely tight budgets, and the ongoing pressure to balance the needs of essential services with capital and infrastructure investments is a significant challenge. Without a designated revenue stream or state financial support, the mandate to budget for maintenance at a rate of at least 0.5% of the total construction cost for all new buildings after January 1, 2026, could jeopardize the ability of municipalities to fund critical services such as public safety, education, and local health services.

We respectfully urge that the state work in partnership with the League and municipal leaders to identify a designated revenue stream or financial aid that would help alleviate the undue financial hardship this requirement could impose. By collaborating on a sustainable solution, we can ensure that municipalities remain able to meet their existing obligations while complying with the maintenance budget requirements outlined in this proposal.

We are committed to working together with the sponsor and the state to identify practical solutions that will protect municipalities from any negative financial impact, while also ensuring that essential public services and local priorities continue to be met.

We appreciate the opportunity to engage in this important conversation and look forward to working together toward a balanced approach.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Finance Committee