



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF COMMERCE

Submitted via email

March 6, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley
Chair, House Committee on State Government & Elections
State House
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H. 5869 — Science and Technology Advisory Council

Dear Chair Shanley and Members of the Committee,

Rhode Island Commerce is pleased to support House Bill 5869, which clarifies the structure of the Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC) by eliminating one of two conflicting versions of the authorizing statute. The 2006 General Assembly passed two slightly different versions of the same bill, introducing a conflict whereby it is not clear who is responsible for nominating two members of the Council. This statutory error has contributed to issues in getting STAC to full capacity, limiting its effectiveness.

STAC is charged to “support the state’s research institutions, promote entrepreneurial development, enable all organizations to become more innovative, and perform any other advisory functions as the legislature may designate.” With this, STAC works to catalyze an ecosystem of innovation centered on the science research and technology development taking place in the state’s institutions, elevated by the state’s economic development goals, and in service of promoting, enhancing, and investing in Rhode Island’s innovation economy.

The state and our external partners must be nimble and pursue each opportunity as it arises. This bill will help empower STAC to become more effective in serving Rhode Islanders.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Tanner, Esq.
Secretary of Commerce

CC. Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government & Elections
The Honorable Jennifer A. Stewart
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel