



**RHODE ISLAND LEAGUE
OF CITIES AND TOWNS**

*Distinctive Communities
Powerful Alliance*

March 18, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley, Chair
House State Government and Elections
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: HOUSE RESOLUTION H-5515 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION -- OF SUFFRAGE

Chair Shanley and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 5515, a Resolution that would propose to the voters of the state a constitutional amendment to remove the thirty (30) day state and local residency requirement for voter registration. This change would allow voters to register by or on election day, ensuring that our election system is more accessible and equitable for all Rhode Islanders.

We stand in solidarity with the Rhode Island Town and City Clerks' Association, the Rhode Island Board of Elections, and the Secretary of State in supporting this measure. Currently, Rhode Island already has same-day registration for presidential elections, as mandated by federal law. Removing the 30-day deadline from our state's Constitution would empower the General Assembly to engage in a broader discussion on creating a more equitable and flexible voter registration process that would improve election administration while safeguarding the right to vote.

As it stands, many eligible voters in Rhode Island face unnecessary obstacles due to the 30-day freeze on registration. Hundreds of provisional ballots are disqualified each year because individuals who have moved within 30 days of an election have notified their local canvassers, but the voter rolls are frozen by the existing provision. Consequently, local boards are unable to process changes within that period, and voters who would otherwise be eligible to vote have their provisional ballots rejected.

In some municipalities, this issue has resulted in significant backlogs of unprocessed registrations. This creates an undue burden on our local staff and significantly impacts the timely administration of elections. The current 30-day freeze is an unnecessary obstacle that harms voters without providing any meaningful benefit.

By repealing the 30-day deadline, we can improve voter accessibility and ensure that all eligible Rhode Islanders have the opportunity to participate in elections.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of House Resolution 5515 and work to remove the 30-day voter registration deadline from the state Constitution. This is an important step to ensure that our election system is fair, efficient, and accessible to all.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House State Government and Elections Committee