



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. MCKEE

April 22, 2025

Honorable Evan P. Shanley
Chairman, House Committee on State Government and Elections
Room 135, State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: 2025 H 5725, An Act Relating to Public Records – Access to Public Records – Cost

Dear Chairman Shanley:

The Administration writes to express its concern with H 5725, An Act Relating to Public Records – Access to Public Records – Cost (Act). The Act would waive fees for records requested under the Access to Public Records Act (APRA) by members of the General Assembly who certify that they are acting in their official capacity and need the records for the discharge of their legislative duties.

Currently, the APRA allows public bodies to charge a minimal fee—\$15/hour—for the processing of requests that exceed one hour. *See* R.I. Gen. Laws § 38-2-4(b). The ability to impose fees for the search, retrieval, and redaction of documents serves an important function in the APRA process. Levying fees encourages requestors to carefully tailor their requests to precisely the records they seek, which enables public bodies to timely and efficiently produce the requested records. Fees also serve to deter requests that are unreasonably broad, unduly burdensome, or intended to disrupt the public body's business. Additionally, in the general course of business, the Administration provides records to legislative committees and their staff at no cost, when needed to perform their legislative functions.

Sincerely,

/s/ Andrea M. Shea

Andrea M. Shea
Deputy Executive Counsel
Public Records Officer

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections
Honorable George A. Nardone
Nicole McCarty, Esq.

RHODE ISLAND STATE HOUSE, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903