



Town of Westerly

Town Hall • 45 Broad Street • Westerly, Rhode Island 02891

TEL: (401) 348-2503 • FAX: (401) 348-2571

Board of Canvassers

January 14, 2026

SENT VIA EMAIL

HouseStateGovernmentandElections@rilegislature.gov

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Westerly Board of Canvassers Support for H-7007 (Military and Disabled Voter Mail Ballots)

Dear Chairperson Shanley and Hon. Members of the House State Government and Election Committee:

The Westerly Board of Canvassers voted unanimously to support **H-7007**, an act to preserve the secure and timely access to mail ballots for overseas U.S. citizens, military service members, and voters with disabilities. This act ensures mail ballots can be submitted privately and securely to state election officials for tabulation.

The voters who qualify under the provisions of this act by virtue of being overseas, serving on active-duty deployments, or eligible disabled as defined in the legislation, require additional accommodations to ensure their ballots are received and counted. The Secretary of State continues to maintain a secure system to allow this classification of mail ballots to be securely and independently submitted. Without passage, these ballots will be required to be submitted through less secure platforms such as personal electronic mail or facsimile. Federal law requires this category of voters to be afforded additional protection and not to face an undue burden on participation in our democratic process.

Notably, this method of voting has been used successfully by voters to return mail ballots and by state election officials to receive and tabulate ballots in previous elections. This legislation continues the existing program that had a sunset provision expiring last year. Prompt passage will ensure the same access continues into and beyond the 2026 elections.

I respectfully encourage you to consider passage of **H-7007** to preserve the existing rights of overseas U.S. citizens, military service members, and voters with disabilities. If you have any questions regarding this bill, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 401-348-2503, or via email at rharold@westerlyri.gov. Thank you for your consideration and support for this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rees Harold", is positioned above the printed name.

Rees S. Harold
Registrar & Clerk to the Board of Canvassers
Town of Westerly

Cc: Representative Samuel A. Azzinaro
Representative Brian P. Kennedy
Representative Tina L. Spears
Westerly Board of Canvassers
Westerly Town Council