



Director's Office

One Capitol Hill | Providence, RI 02908 | (401) 222-2280
Jonathan Womer, Director

January 27, 2026

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

Re: House Bill 7236 – An Act Relating To General Assembly -- The Equity Impact Statement And Budget Equity Impact Act

Dear Chairperson Shanley,

Thank you for providing the Department of Administration (the “Department”) the opportunity to submit our concerns in response to House Bill No. 7236, which establishes a two-year pilot program, from January 2027 to December 2028, to incorporate equity impact statements into the legislative process for both the House and Senate chamber.

The Department appreciates the intent of the legislation but has concerns regarding implementation and availability of agency resources. The Commission on Health Advocacy & Equity (CHAE) is comprised of experts from outside of state government and thus will require a significant amount of coordination with and input from state agencies – particularly the Office of Management and Budget and the Division of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – in order to draft these equity impact statements. This will overlap with the fiscal note process, requiring the skills of the same analysts in the same timeframe and creating extensive resource constraints.

The Department is also concerned about the requirements surrounding the annual state budget. The Governor’s proposed budget is a complex policy document that already goes through a robust analysis process with ample opportunity for stakeholder input. As such, the budget should not be eligible as one of the twenty pieces of proposed legislation for which an equity impact statement may be requested. Should a legislator request an equity impact statement on the budget, it would not be feasible for the CHAE to complete given the subject matter expertise and nuanced data analysis required and lack of resources at the agency level to support such efforts. Further, given the current federal climate, outlining our equity efforts within the state budget may put federal funding at risk as a result of grant certification requirements.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to share our concerns over this legislation with the Committee. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact my office at your convenience.

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Sincerely,


Jonathan Womer
Director, Department of Administration

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections
The Honorable David Morales
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Steven Sepe, Committee Clerk