



CITY OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
Canvassing Department
City Hall - 1st Floor
43 Broadway
Newport, Rhode Island 02840
www.cityofnewport.com
Hugh Moren hmoren@cityofnewport.com (401) 845-5384

March 10, 2026

Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government & Elections
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support of House Bill 7089

Dear Chairman Shanley and Members of the House Committee on State Government & Elections,

As Election Administrator for the City of Newport and on behalf of the Newport Canvassing Authority, I am writing to strongly encourage you to **support passage of House Bill 7089**, which was introduced on behalf of the Secretary of State and has the support of the State Board of Elections and the RI Town & City Clerks Association. This bill addresses a number of updates to election administration that would help both voters, candidates and election officials.

It would move the date of the statewide primary from eight Tuesdays before the general election to the ninth Tuesday before the general. This is a proactive move because Rhode Island's current date leaves a very short window between the primary and a federally-required deadline to produce and mail general election ballots to military and overseas voters 45 days before the general election. Currently, if we had a recount or another issue that delays final certification of the primary, we would miss that federally-required deadline and would open Rhode Island up to a lawsuit from the Justice Department, who would force us to make this change.

House Bill 7089 would move deadlines tied in law to the primary and general election dates to account for changing the date of the primary and provide more time for the collection of signatures on nomination papers. It also addresses what to do when certain key election deadlines fall on holidays.

The Newport Canvassing Authority urges you to support passage of House Bill 7089 and thanks you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Hugh Moren
Election Administrator

Sharon Connors
Chair, Newport Canvassing Authority