



State of Rhode Island

Department of State | Office of the Secretary of State

Gregg M. Amore, Secretary of State

March 26, 2026

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley, Chair
House Committee on State Government & Elections

RE: In support of H8282 - An Act Relating to Elections – Nomination of Party and Independent Candidates

Dear Chair Shanley,

I write this letter in support of House Bill 8282, legislation introduced at the Department of State's request that would allow voters to electronically sign nomination papers for candidates in a voter's district through the Department of State's website.

With the success of online voter registration and the online mail ballot application system, it is clear that voters are increasingly inclined to use online tools, and we believe we can implement the nomination papers process in the same way. We envision the online portal would function similarly to the online mail ballot application, where voters would have to log in to their voter record by providing their first name, last name, date of birth, and zip code, and input their Rhode Island driver's license or state identification number to validate their identity. The online portal would serve as a complementary tool, as candidates would still be able to use the current paper-based nomination paper system.

Furthermore, the online portal offers greater opportunities for enfranchisement for our military and overseas voters, as well as for voters with disabilities, by encouraging their participation in a process that is not easily or readily accessible to them. All voters deserve the opportunity to participate in our entire democratic process.

With this bill, voters will be better informed about the candidates they are eligible to vote for; candidates will have more opportunities to qualify for ballot placement; and local canvassing authorities will have a reduced workload in approving online nomination signatures, as voters will have already validated their identity.

Overall, I urge this Committee and the full House to support House Bill 8282, as this initiative will encourage further discussion on how we can improve the administration of our elections, remove barriers to civic participation, and ensure the integrity and authenticity of our elections.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michelle Arias, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, at marias@sos.ri.gov.

Sincerely,

Gregg M. Amore
Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government & Elections
The Honorable Brandon Voas

State House, Room 218, Providence, RI 02903

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