



**RHODE ISLAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**  
235 Promenade Street, Room 425  
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

April 7, 2026

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

**RE: H 7673 An Act Relating to Public Property and Works – Management and Disposal of Property**

Dear Chairman Shanley,

Thank you for providing the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) the opportunity to comment on H 7673, which was introduced at DEM's request and would authorize leases of up to 40 years for commercial fishing industry-related purposes at any port or marine facility owned and operated by DEM. DEM supports this legislation.

DEM operates several ports for the benefit of Rhode Island's commercial fishing industry including the Port of Galilee, State Pier #9 in Newport, and Chase Marina in Tiverton. These facilities are critical to the continued success of the state's fishing industry as they offer competitive lease terms and access to related support businesses. Under current law, DEM can offer leases of up to 40 years at the Port of Galilee, but leases at all other properties are capped at 20 years. Businesses looking to make major capital improvements, such as investing in buildings and equipment, sometimes prefer leases longer than 20 years. Longer leases allow these businesses to amortize the costs of these investments over a longer period and aids in the securing of financing.

This legislation would build on the successful model used in the Port of Galilee by authorizing DEM to offer leases of up to 40 years at other commercial fishing facilities. At present, the facilities impacted include State Pier #9 in Newport and Chase Marina in Tiverton, but the legislation is intentionally drafted to allow the same long-term leases at any ports or marine facilities owned and operated by DEM. This language will ensure that DEM can make leases of up to 40 years available at any future commercial fishing facilities.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on this legislation and would be pleased to make ourselves available as needed. Please feel free to contact Jason McNamee, DEM Deputy Director for Natural Resources, at [jason.mcnamee@dem.ri.gov](mailto:jason.mcnamee@dem.ri.gov) should you have any additional questions or wish to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terrence Gray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T".

Terrence Gray, P.E.  
Director

cc: Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections  
The Honorable Terri Cortvriend  
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House  
Lynne Urbani, House Policy Director