



**RHODE ISLAND LEAGUE
OF CITIES AND TOWNS**

*Distinctive Communities
Powerful Alliance*

April 7, 2026

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

RE: HOUSE BILL 7915 – AN ACT RELATING TO WATERS AND NAVIGATION -- REGULATION OF BOATS

Dear Chair Shanley and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns and our 39-member municipalities, we write to express our support for House Bill 7915.

We appreciate the sponsor's leadership in introducing this thoughtful and forward-looking legislation. The creation of a dedicated, restricted receipt account to fund freshwater lake management is a particularly important component of this proposal. By ensuring that these funds are used solely for their intended purpose, the bill provides transparency, accountability, and confidence that resources will be directed toward protecting and maintaining Rhode Island's freshwater ecosystems.

Healthy lakes and water bodies are vital to the quality of life in our communities. They support recreation, tourism, environmental sustainability, and, in many cases, local economies. Municipalities often bear the burden of addressing issues such as invasive species, water quality degradation, and maintenance of public access points, frequently with limited resources. This legislation represents a practical and equitable approach by asking users of these waterways to contribute a small, reasonable fee toward their preservation.

Importantly, the proposed fee structure is minimal and unlikely to pose a hardship for motorboat owners, while collectively generating meaningful support for the state's freshwater lake management program. The League believes this user-based funding model is both fair and effective. We commend the sponsor for recognizing the importance of investing in our natural resources and for advancing a measure that will benefit municipalities and residents alike.

Thank you again for your consideration of this legislation and for the opportunity to share the League's perspective.

Sincerely,

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House State Government and Elections