



We Make Rhode Island Happen

AFSCME Rhode Island Council 94

American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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April 9, 2026

Dear House Veterans Affairs Committee Member,

We are writing to express RI Council, 94 AFSCME's strong support for H-8124 / S-2753, the Rhode Island Veterans' Home Staffing Support Act.

Local 904, AFSCME represents RI Veterans' Home direct care medical staff including Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Senior Institution Attendants. The union also represents dietary, maintenance, clerical, pharmacy, and activities employees.

Despite many aggressive recruitment drives, the RI Veterans' Home routinely operates with 20 fewer Certified Nursing Assistants than currently budgeted.

The shortage of Certified Nursing Assistants is exacerbated by:

- An inadequate pay scale progression.
- Higher CNA pay scale progression at Rhode Island hospitals/nursing homes and in Massachusetts, which deters recruitment and retention.
- RI Veterans' Home Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses were moved to the 500 classified pay schedule to provide increases over a longer period of time.

RI Council 94, AFSCME appreciates that the administration has proposed in the FY 2027 Budget an additional 12 CNA FTEs/funds to reopen the Foxtrot neighborhood.

However, if the CNA pay scale is not adjusted, new applicants will continue to refuse positions, or if hired, only remain for short periods of time.

H-8124 / S-2753 would actively encourage solutions by requiring the Department of Administration to:

1. Conduct a wage benefit analysis for all classifications wage rates/wage progression.
2. Establish a corrective action plan.
3. Revise job specifications.

In closing, we respectfully ask you to support H-8124 / S-2753.

Sincerely,

Michael McDonald
President

James A. Cenerini
Legislative Affairs/Political Action Coordinator