

April 15, 2026

The Honorable V. Susan Sosnowski, Chair  
Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee  
Rhode Island Senate  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: SENATE BILL 2529 – AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- NEXT GENERATION  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS ACT

Chair Sosnowski and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write to express our comments and concerns regarding Senate Bill 2529. The League appreciates the intent of this legislation and shares the General Assembly's commitment to advancing sound public policy, including efforts that may relate to sustainability, energy efficiency, and long-term fiscal and operational improvements for Rhode Island's municipalities. Our cities and towns are already actively engaged in these efforts and continue to invest in the modernization of public facilities and infrastructure in ways that balance environmental responsibility with fiscal constraints.

While we support the overarching goals of Senate Bill 2529, we are concerned about the potential impacts the legislation may have on municipal operations and local budgets as currently drafted. In particular, the requirements contemplated in the bill appear likely to increase costs for cities and towns at a time when capital needs are already significant across core municipal assets, including schools, public safety facilities, and other essential infrastructure. Without a clearly identified and sustainable funding source, these additional requirements risk functioning as an unfunded mandate, ultimately placing further pressure on local property taxpayers.

The League is also concerned about the practical implementation challenges that may arise for municipalities of varying sizes and capacities. Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns are not uniform in their staffing, technical expertise, or access to specialized planning and engineering resources. As a result, a one-size-fits-all approach may create compliance challenges, particularly for smaller communities or those with aging infrastructure. Where applicable, the bill would benefit from additional flexibility, phased implementation timelines, or clear standards that account for local conditions and existing capital planning processes.

In addition, municipalities would benefit from greater clarity regarding any waiver, exemption, or alternative compliance pathways contemplated under the legislation. If such mechanisms are included, it is important that they be structured in a way that is predictable, consistently administered, and accessible to local governments without creating undue administrative burden or project delays.

The League respectfully encourages consideration of amendments that would ensure adequate state support or incentive structures accompany any new municipal requirements, provide flexibility in implementation to account for local capacity and infrastructure realities, and clarify compliance mechanisms to support predictable and efficient administration at the local level. These adjustments would help ensure that the goals of Senate Bill 2529 can be achieved in a manner that is both effective and fiscally sustainable for Rhode Island's municipalities.

The League remains committed to working collaboratively with the sponsor of Senate Bill 2529 and members of the General Assembly to advance shared policy objectives while ensuring that local governments are positioned to implement any new requirements in a practical, equitable, and financially responsible manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee