

March 12, 2026

The Honorable Louis P. DiPalma
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

RE: CCRI's GO Bond Request for the Workforce Innovation Center

Dear Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee;

I write to express full support for the Community College of Rhode Island's request for a General Obligation bond to construct the Workforce Innovation Center at its Warwick Campus. I have run my own advance manufacturing operation for 31 years. I have been the Executive Director of Rhode Island Manufacturers Association for 10 years. The need for training in the manufacturing sector is critical. We have an aging workforce and the need for additional support for our business sector.

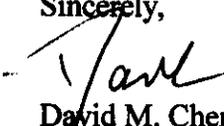
Rhode Island's economy depends on a pipeline of skilled, job-ready workers, particularly in the skilled trades and technical fields that power our state's economic growth. As employers, we see every day the urgent need for more Rhode Islanders trained in the practical, hands-on skills that keep our industries competitive. The Workforce Innovation Center will directly address this demand by expanding CCRI's capacity to train workers in high-need sectors—including construction trades, advanced manufacturing, IT, maritime, and other high-demand fields.

CCRI has long been the state's most important engine for workforce development. For more than 60 years the college has delivered high-quality, affordable education and training for Rhode Islanders of every age and background. The college's reach, scale, statewide footprint, and deep employer partnerships make it uniquely qualified to develop the workforce our industries need.

I view this project as a critical investment in Rhode Island's future economic competitiveness. The Workforce Innovation Center will provide modern, industry-aligned training labs and program space; expand apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship pipelines; and ensure that more Rhode Islanders graduate with the in-demand credentials employers are seeking. It will also strengthen the collaboration between industry and education—something Rhode Island must do to remain competitive regionally and nationally.

For these reasons, I strongly urge your support of CCRI's bond request. The Workforce Innovation Center is the right project, at the right institution, at the right moment for Rhode Island.

Sincerely,


David M. Chenevert
Former Executive Director
Rhode Island Manufacturers Association