



March 31, 2026

The Honorable Louis DiPalma
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI

Re: Opposition to H7127, Article 5, Section 8 – Newport Landing and Boarding Fees

Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Discover Newport, I write to express strong opposition to the Governor’s proposed increase in cruise ship landing fees included in Article 5, Section 8 of H7127. As the region’s destination marketing organization, we work to drive visitation and support a tourism economy in which cruise activity plays a meaningful role.

Cruise passengers generate significant spending at restaurants, retail establishments, and cultural attractions. A January 2026 Tourism Economics report found Rhode Island’s cruise industry supported 500 jobs and \$131 million in economic output in 2024, while more than 60% of cruise visitors return for longer stays according to the Cruise Line Industry Association.

Newport has already increased fees from \$6 to \$20 per passenger to support infrastructure improvements. The proposed additional \$10 increase—on a short timeline—risks undermining Rhode Island’s competitiveness in a price-sensitive market. Neighboring states continue to invest in and promote their ports aggressively and cruise lines routinely adjust itineraries based on port costs; further increases could result in lost calls and economic impact.

Maintaining a stable, competitive fee structure is essential. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to reject the proposed increase in cruise ship landing fees in H7127. We appreciate your consideration and your continued support of Rhode Island’s tourism economy.

Sincerely,

Victoria Cimino
President & CEO
Discover Newport