



CITY OF CENTRAL FALLS  
MAYOR MARIA RIVERA

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May 12, 2026

The Honorable Louis DiPalma  
Chair, Senate Committee on Finance  
Rhode Island House of Representatives  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

***Re: Support for S3087 and S2087***

Dear Chair DiPalma and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Finance,

On behalf of the City of Central Falls, I respectfully submit this letter in strong support of S3087 and S2087, which (1) authorizes the City to finance the construction, renovation, improvement, alteration, repair, furnishing, and equipping of schools and school facilities by the issuance of not more than \$25,000,000 in bonds, notes, and/or other evidences of indebtedness and (2) adds the state-created Central Falls Detention Facility Corporation (CFDFC or Wyatt ) to the state's payment in lieu of taxes program which would yield a meaningful annual payment to the city per year. I am attaching a City Council resolution in support of both.

S3087 is necessary to keep the new Central Falls High School track and field project moving forward. The City previously received enabling legislation last year for \$15 million in financing authority. Since that time, however, the project has encountered significant and unavoidable cost overruns caused by environmental conditions and stormwater management requirements. S3087 updates that prior authorization by increasing the not-to-exceed amount to \$25 million and superseding Public Act 019 (H6077-2025) and Public Act 020 (S0674-2025) as applied to Central Falls. Please note that the voters of Central Falls previously voted on November 5, 2024 to authorize local school construction bonds not to exceed \$26M, so this legislation still falls under that cap.

The additional financing authority is driven by real construction and regulatory issues, not by a change in the City's commitment to fiscal discipline. Environmental remediation, stormwater controls, and related site work must be addressed responsibly. These costs are necessary to protect public health, comply with applicable requirements, manage runoff, and ensure that the finished facility is safe, durable, and appropriate for long-term school and community use. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Finance Committee to support S3087 and to advance this legislation so that Central Falls can complete this important school facilities project in a safe, responsible, and fiscally transparent manner.

Regarding S2087, pursuant to R.I.G.L. 45-13-5.1, there is a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) program in the state budget that reimburses municipalities for property taxes that would have been due on real

property exempted from taxation by state law, including property owned by private nonprofit higher educational institutions, nonprofit hospitals, or any state-owned hospital, veterans' residential facility, or correctional facility. Municipalities may be reimbursed up to 27.0 percent of the tax that would have been collected if the property had been taxable. In Central Falls, the Wyatt was created in 1991 pursuant to RIGL 45-54-1, which allowed municipalities to pursue economic development through the acquisition or construction of correctional facilities. While the enabling legislation the General Assembly envisioned the Wyatt as an economic engine for the City, it has failed to do so in the last fifteen years. This legislation helps to address a complex problem including the Wyatt's ongoing fiscal troubles (including a prior receivership in 2014 and ongoing federal litigation), the presence of other correctional facilities in the PILOT program and the city's need for the facility to live up to its promise as an economic engine.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MR', with a wavy line extending to the right.

Maria Rivera  
*Mayor*

Cc: Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee

Enclosure