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May 7, 2026

The Honorable Louis P. DiPalma, Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: 2026 S 2105 – AN ACT RELATING TO HIGHWAYS – RELOCATION OF UTILITY SERVICES

Dear Chairman, DiPalma:

Thank you for the opportunity to allow the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) to submit this letter of opposition on S 2105, AN ACT RELATING TO HIGHWAYS- RELOCATION OF UTILITY SERVICES.

“This act would provide that the cost of relocation of utility facilities necessitated by highway construction shall be reimbursed by the state at fifty percent (50%) of the reasonable amount to private corporations and companies. The cost of relocation shall be fully reimbursed by the state for relocation of utility facilities owned by municipalities and political subdivisions.”

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) opposes S 2105. In 2022, when H7604, and S2771 bills were proposed by RIDOT and subsequently passed by the General Assembly, the sole purpose was to better control expenses and delays involved with the process of relocation of utility services, and allow RIDOT to complete projects on time, and on budget. By changing the reimbursement formula from one hundred percent (100%) to fifty percent (50%), we are providing another layer of accountability when utility services must be relocated within our project(s)

We thank you for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Rocchio, P.E.
Interim Director, Rhode Island Department of Transportation

cc: The Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Linda L. Ujifusa
Kristen Silvia, Director of Legislation and Deputy Chief of Staff