

April 30, 2026

Senator Louis DiPalma
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI, 02903

Dear Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Kristina Contreras Fox, and I serve on the Woonsocket City Council. I write in strong support of S2238 sponsored by Woonsocket State Senator Melissa Murray, a bill to increase income tax rates for households earning over \$640,000 annually. This legislation represents a necessary and long-overdue step toward building a more stable and functional Rhode Island.

First and foremost, our state needs sustainable revenue that we can count on year after year to run RI effectively. Right now, too many of our core systems are strained by chronic underfunding. Our infrastructure is aging, our education system is struggling to meet the needs of students, and our public transportation network continues to face cuts despite growing demand. These issues negatively affect the daily lives of Rhode Islanders. S2238 would provide a reliable source of funding to address these needs and invest in the long-term health of our state.

Second, we must be honest about past policy decisions. In 2006, Rhode Island significantly reduced income tax rates for high earners under the belief that the benefits would “trickle down” in the form of job creation and economic growth. That promise did not materialize. Instead, we have seen persistent budget challenges and widening inequality. The results have not been more people building generational wealth: it’s more people experiencing homelessness. This was a failed experiment, and continuing down the same path will only deepen the problems we face. Reversing course is not radical. It is responsible governance grounded in evidence.

Finally, this proposal would at last prioritize all of Rhode Island instead of a select few. Most Rhode Islanders stand to benefit from stronger public investment, while only a small percentage would see higher taxes. In communities like mine, the impact of underinvestment is clear. Our school system is struggling and facing hundreds of thousands in budget cuts. We face difficult decisions about funding essential services like the Department of Public Works, especially during severe winter storms. Despite having some of the highest RIPTA ridership in the state, our bus routes continue to be reduced, limiting access to jobs, education, and healthcare. And more and more people are sleeping outside because they literally have no where else to go.

Woonsocket deserves better. All of Rhode Island deserves better. Supporting S2238 is a chance to invest fairly in the well-being of all Rhode Islanders and ensure that our tax system reflects our shared priorities and values. This is not merely to feel better about our priorities; it is to ensure sustainable prosperity for Rhode Island and Rhode Islanders. A rising tide lifts all boats. I urge you to pass S2238 and take a meaningful step toward a stronger, more equitable Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristina Fox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kristina" and the last name "Fox" clearly legible.

Kristina Contreras Fox

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