



April 30, 2026

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

RE: SENATE RESOLUTION 2676 - RESOLUTION MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$150,000 TO THE MAIN STREET RHODE ISLAND PROGRAM

Chair DiPalma and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we respectfully submit this testimony in support of Senate Resolution 2676, which would authorize the appropriation of \$150,000 to the Main Street Rhode Island Program.

The League and our member municipalities recognize the important role the Main Street Rhode Island Program plays in strengthening downtowns and village centers, supporting small businesses, and advancing local economic development efforts across the state. The program has consistently demonstrated its value as a practical and effective partner to municipalities working to revitalize historic commercial corridors and enhance community vibrancy.

Cities and towns across Rhode Island continue to face challenges related to vacant storefronts, aging building stock, and the need for sustained investment in traditional downtown areas. The Main Street program helps communities address these challenges by providing technical assistance, coordinating revitalization strategies, and supporting efforts that encourage private reinvestment. These initiatives are essential to maintaining strong, active, and attractive town centers that serve as both economic and civic hubs.

Equally important, the program strengthens the small business ecosystem that is central to Rhode Island's municipal economies. By supporting local entrepreneurs, facilitating façade improvements, and promoting coordinated marketing and business development initiatives, Main Street programs help businesses grow and remain rooted in their communities. These efforts not only enhance economic activity but also contribute to local job creation and a stronger municipal tax base.

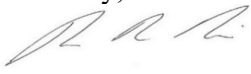
The League also recognizes the program's ability to leverage additional investment. State support for Main Street initiatives often serves as a catalyst for matching private investment, philanthropic contributions, and complementary grant funding. As a result, a relatively modest state appropriation can generate a meaningful return for participating communities and extend far beyond its initial investment.

In addition, the technical assistance and capacity-building support provided through the program is especially valuable for smaller municipalities that may not have dedicated economic development staff. This expertise helps ensure that communities of all sizes have access to proven strategies in revitalization, historic preservation, and downtown management.

For these reasons, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns respectfully urges the Committee to support Senate Resolution 2676 and approve the proposed appropriation for the Main Street Rhode Island Program. We believe this investment will continue to strengthen communities, support local businesses, and enhance the long-term economic vitality of Rhode Island's cities and towns.

We appreciate your consideration and remain available as a resource as the Committee evaluates this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Rossi", written in a cursive style.

Randy R. Rossi  
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of Senate Finance Committee