

City of Pawtucket

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

APPROVED: 2/11/2026

A RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ENACT LEGISLATION ENTITLED "A JOINT RESOLUTION AND AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE STATE TO ENTER INTO A FINANCING AGREEMENT RELATING TO SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION IN THE CITY OF PAWTUCKET AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF PAWTUCKET TO FINANCE RENOVATIONS AND REPAIRS TO SAMUEL SLATER MIDDLE SCHOOL FACILITIES, OR THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, IMPROVEMENT, FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING OF A NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL AND SCHOOL FACILITIES AND ALL EXPENSES INCIDENT THERETO, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO COSTS OF DESIGN, DEMOLITION, ATHLETIC FIELDS, LANDSCAPING AND PARKING BY THE ISSUANCE OF NOT MORE THAN \$22,500,000 CITY BONDS, CITY NOTES AND/OR OTHER EVIDENCES OF INDEBTEDNESS THEREFOR"

S-2679

- WHEREAS,** pursuant to Article XII of the Rhode Island Constitution, it is the duty of the state of Rhode Island (the "State") and the Rhode Island General Assembly to promote public schools as the diffusion of knowledge is essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the Rhode Island people; and
- WHEREAS,** it is the duty of the State and the Rhode Island General Assembly to adopt all means which they deem necessary and proper to secure to the people, the advantages and opportunities of education and guarantee adequate public school housing for all public school children in the State; and
- WHEREAS,** school facilities provide more than a place for instruction. The physical learning environment contributes to the successful performance of educational programs designed to meet students' educational needs and good educational outcomes depend on safe healthy school buildings. Every student needs a safe, healthy, and sanitary learning environment that promotes student learning and development; and
- WHEREAS,** The Samuel Slater Middle School in the city of Pawtucket, Rhode Island (the "City") is in need of major repairs and upgrades, which presently interfere with the effective operation of the school and negatively affect the health safety and welfare of the children of Pawtucket; and
- WHEREAS,** It is critical for the State and City to balance the demonstrated needs of students with fiscal realities and the potential impact of tax increases on middle-class and working families; and
- WHEREAS,** For the first time since the State's enactment of the 4% property tax levy cap in 1985, the City was required to obtain approval from the state department of revenue to exceed the property tax levy cap and increase taxes in order to meet debt service obligations arising from school construction bonds approved by voters in 2018; and
- WHEREAS,** The City is currently midway through the Pawtucket High School project, the largest school construction project in the State, and must carry the full costs of the High School project until Rhode Island department of education ("RIDE") construction aid reimbursements become payable upon completion of the High School project; and
- WHEREAS,** As recently as 2010, the City was on the verge of state financial intervention, or potentially, bankruptcy; and
- WHEREAS,** Through hard work and prudent fiscal management for the past 15 years, City officials have restored and strengthened the City's financial position; and

- WHEREAS,** Given the City's existing school bond debt and other financial obligations, the City does not, in the near term, have the ability to borrow for improvements to Slater Middle School without sharply increasing taxes and jeopardizing the City's financial stability; and
- WHEREAS,** The City cannot risk undermining years of budgetary restraint, prudent cashflow management and responsible debt practices, or foreclose future opportunities for successful borrowing, by undertaking Samuel Slater Middle School improvements at this time without additional assistance from the State; and
- WHEREAS,** the State is able to issue appropriation-backed bonds at lower interest rates than the City is able to obtain on its general obligation bonds; and
- WHEREAS,** The City believes that the State desires to recognize, support and encourage the City's efforts to balance fiscal responsibility with the provision of safe and healthy learning environments for all students; and
- WHEREAS,** It is less costly for the State to finance a school project at lower interest rates than it is for the City to finance a school project at higher interest rates and then seek school housing aid reimbursement from the State; and
- WHEREAS,** If the State finances improvements to Samuel Slater Middle School, it is anticipated that the State will require the City to issue general obligation bonds or other evidences to the State or to the Rhode Island Health and Educational Building Corporation in order to evidence the obligation of the City to pay or reimburse the State for a portion of the costs of such school improvements.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY OF PAWTUCKET HEREBY MEMORIALIZES THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ENACT LEGISLATION PROVIDING THAT, IN LIEU OF PROVIDING SCHOOL HOUSING AID REIMBURSEMENT ON DEBT SERVICE ON THE CITY'S SCHOOL BONDS, THE STATE MAY ENTER INTO A FINANCING AGREEMENT RELATING TO SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION IN THE CITY OF PAWTUCKET AND AUTHORIZING THE STATE TO FINANCE THE STATE'S HOUSING AID CONTRIBUTION DIRECTLY BY BONDS ISSUED THROUGH THE RHODE ISLAND HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL BUILDING CORPORATION AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF PAWTUCKET, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF CITY ELECTORS, TO FINANCE RENOVATIONS AND REPAIRS TO SAMUEL SLATER MIDDLE SCHOOL FACILITIES, OR THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, IMPROVEMENT, FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING OF A NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL AND SCHOOL FACILITIES AND ALL EXPENSES INCIDENT THERETO, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO COSTS OF DESIGN, DEMOLITION, ATHLETIC FIELDS, LANDSCAPING AND PARKING BY THE ISSUANCE OF NOT MORE THAN \$22,500,000 CITY BONDS, CITY NOTES AND/OR OTHER EVIDENCES OF INDEBTEDNESS THEREFOR.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: THIS RESOLUTION SHALL TAKE EFFECT UPON ITS PASSAGE.

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF PAWTUCKET**

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Clerk

**READ AND REFERRED TO THE
COMMITTEE**

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Clerk

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RECOMMENDS
COMMITTEE

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Chair

**READ AND PASSED ON A ROLL CALL
VOTE: AYES 9 NOES 0**

2/11/2026

Clerk

APPROVED

2/12/2026

MAYOR