

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER



CITY OF WARWICK

FRANK J. PICOZZI

MAYOR

May 20, 2026

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

Via Electronic Mail

Dear Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As the Mayor of Warwick, I write in strong opposition to Senate Bill 2814, which would redirect statewide hotel tax revenue from the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau (PWCVB), also known as GoProvidence, to the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation. This change would significantly diminish the PWCVB's ability to support year-round business travel, meetings, conventions, and sporting events — work that is essential to the economic health of Warwick and to Rhode Island as a whole.

The PWCVB's hotel tax allocation is not a subsidy. It is a strategic investment that delivers measurable returns for our city and for the state. Warwick's economy is closely tied to the meetings and sports business that the Bureau brings into Rhode Island. Weakening the organization responsible for attracting these visitors would have direct consequences for our hotels, restaurants, and the many residents whose livelihoods depend on a strong hospitality sector.

The PWCVB's scope of work is fundamentally different from other regional tourism districts. The Bureau and its subsidiary, the Rhode Island Sports Commission, are responsible for attracting meetings, conventions, trade shows, and sporting events statewide. In FY25 alone, they booked 221 future events, representing 285,564 attendees, 128,784 hotel room nights, and nearly \$93.8 million in direct spending across Rhode Island.

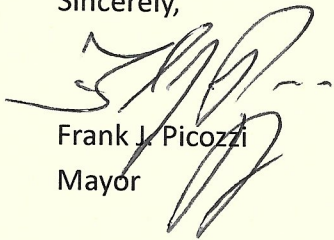
Warwick is proudly home to Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport and to the Crowne Plaza - known affectionately as the 'Convention Center South.' These assets, along with our hotel inventory and our restaurants, make us a desirable location for meetings, conventions and sporting events. The PWCVB is the organization that recruits this business and keeps our hotels and restaurants busy. When events are in town, the impact is immediate.

Beyond its core responsibilities, the PWCVB also plays a critical statewide role in major initiatives that extend far beyond the Providence/Warwick region. For example, the organization has been deeply involved in preparing Rhode Island for the 2026 World Cup, investing approximately \$300,000 in statewide planning and marketing efforts, including \$40,000 to support youth tournaments held across the state.

The impact of this work is not defined solely by statistics. It is essential to the health of our local businesses, the jobs it sustains, and the livelihoods that depend on it. Warwick's hotels, restaurants, and small businesses rely on the steady flow of visitors that the PWCVB brings into our community. Reducing its funding would have immediate, negative consequences for our business community and for the economic stability of our city.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee not to advance Senate Bill 2814.

Sincerely,



Frank J. Picozzi  
Mayor