

May 12, 2026

The Honorable Louis DiPalma
Chair, Senate Committee on Finance
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the RI Hospitality Association, I write in strong support of S 3016, which authorizes the appropriation of \$800,000 to WaterFire Providence.

WaterFire has become one of Rhode Island's most recognizable and successful cultural attractions. Its events bring thousands of visitors into downtown Providence throughout the year and provide a major economic boost to restaurants, hotels, retailers, and small businesses across the city and surrounding communities.

For many hospitality businesses, WaterFire nights represent some of the busiest and most important evenings of the year. The event drives foot traffic, increases tourism activity, supports jobs, and helps showcase Rhode Island as a vibrant destination for arts, culture, dining, and entertainment. Visitors who attend WaterFire frequently dine at local restaurants, stay overnight in local hotels, and return for future visits and events.

Beyond its direct economic impact, WaterFire also contributes significantly to Rhode Island's identity and quality of life. It has helped transform downtown Providence into a nationally recognized cultural destination and serves as a source of pride for residents and businesses alike.


Continued state support for WaterFire is an investment in tourism, small businesses, economic activity, and the continued revitalization of downtown Providence. The return generated by these events extends well beyond a single evening and benefits the broader Rhode Island economy.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to support SJR 3016.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Ryan Moot
Manager of Government Affairs
Rhode Island Hospitality Association

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