



May 7, 2026

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

Re: SUPPORT: Senate Resolution No. 3183 Joint Resolution Making an Appropriation of \$250,000 to 401 Tech Bridge to Study and Explore Seaglidors in Rhode Island

Dear Chair DiPalma and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association, we respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Resolution No. 3183: Joint Resolution Making an Appropriation of \$250,000 to 401 Tech Bridge to Study and Explore Seaglidors in Rhode Island.

This resolution supports the development, commercialization, and deployment of electric seaglider technology in Rhode Island. This is far more than a research initiative. It is a strategic investment in Rhode Island's future as a national leader in advanced manufacturing, maritime innovation, defense technology, clean transportation, and next-generation workforce development.

Rhode Island holds a unique and historic position in American manufacturing. As the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution in the United States, our state has repeatedly demonstrated an ability to lead during periods of technological transformation. Today, we stand at the threshold of another transformational moment—where aerospace, maritime engineering, electrification, artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, composites manufacturing, and defense innovation are converging into entirely new industries.

Electric seaglidors represent one of the most promising examples of that convergence.

These next-generation vessels combine elements of aircraft, hydrofoils, and maritime transportation systems to create high-speed, all-electric coastal mobility platforms

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capable of transporting passengers, cargo, and defense assets with dramatically lower emissions and lower operating costs. Their applications extend well beyond transportation and include maritime logistics, emergency response, coastal surveillance, workforce mobility, tourism, national defense, and advanced ocean technology.

Rhode Island is exceptionally well-positioned to become a center of excellence for this emerging industry.

Our state already possesses many of the foundational assets necessary to support this ecosystem, including:

- A globally recognized maritime and defense cluster
- Advanced composites and precision manufacturing capabilities
- Engineering and research institutions
- Port and waterfront infrastructure
- A growing blue economy sector
- Strong partnerships among industry, academia, defense, and government

Most importantly, Rhode Island is already home to companies and innovators actively advancing seaglider technology and related systems. The opportunity before us is not theoretical—it is real, emerging, and aligned with industries where Rhode Island already competes successfully on a global scale.

The proposed study through 401 Tech Bridge would help position Rhode Island to:

- Evaluate infrastructure and manufacturing opportunities
- Identify supply chain and workforce needs
- Explore defense and dual-use applications
- Support commercialization pathways
- Assess economic development potential
- Strengthen partnerships with federal agencies, research institutions, and private industry
- Advance Rhode Island's leadership in maritime autonomy, electrification, and next-generation transportation

This initiative also aligns closely with the renewed strategic focus emerging from the Rhode Island Department of War and the broader defense innovation ecosystem surrounding naval and maritime technologies. Rhode Island's historic relationship with

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national defense, undersea technology, naval systems, and advanced engineering creates a natural opportunity to evaluate seaglidors for multiple defense and homeland security applications, including:

- Coastal logistics
- Rapid personnel transport
- Medical evacuation
- Maritime surveillance
- Emergency response
- Autonomous operations
- Island and offshore infrastructure support

In addition to attracting new investment and innovation, this initiative has the potential to breathe new life into existing Rhode Island manufacturers by creating opportunities for participation across a broad supply chain. Rhode Island businesses involved in composites, marine fabrication, electronics, precision machining, propulsion systems, sensors, batteries, software integration, AI systems, and advanced materials could all benefit from the growth of this sector.

This is precisely the type of forward-looking initiative Rhode Island should be supporting.

The proposed appropriation is modest compared to the potential long-term return in economic development, manufacturing expansion, workforce opportunities, research partnerships, and national visibility.

At a time when states across the country are competing aggressively for leadership in advanced mobility, defense technology, and clean transportation systems, Rhode Island cannot afford to remain on the sidelines. We have the talent, infrastructure, geographic advantages, manufacturing base, and innovation ecosystem necessary to lead.

Senate Resolution No. 3183 provides Rhode Island with an opportunity to take an important first step toward establishing a leadership position in a rapidly emerging global industry.

For these reasons, the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association respectfully urges favorable consideration and passage of Senate Resolution No. 3183.



Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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