



State of Rhode Island  
Office of the General Treasurer

**James A. Diossa**  
General Treasurer

1 June 2026

The Honorable Louis DiPalma  
Chair, Senate Committee on Finance

The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Finance

**RE:** 2026-S 3296 – *An Act Relating to Public Officers and Employees – Rhode Island Public Employee Pension Revocation and Reduction Act*

Chair DiPalma,

**I write in strong support of 2026-S 3296, which will help ensure that criminals that abuse a position of public trust do not reap the rewards of honorable service in retirement.** Specifically, this amendment would clarify the authority of the Retirement Board of the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island (the "Retirement Board") to initiate civil proceedings to revoke or reduce the pension of a public employee who is convicted or pleads no contest to a felony sex crime related to their public duties.

Under certain circumstances, the state is authorized to reduce or revoke the pension of an individual who has been convicted of – or plead guilty or no contest to – a number of criminal offenses. *See* R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 36-10.1-2, 36-10.1-3. These offenses include embezzlement, felonious theft, or bribery committed in connection with an individual's employment in government service. *See* R.I. Gen. Laws § 36-10.1-3. A fourth catch-all provision allows for revocation where a public officer or employee has "willfully and with the intent to defraud, realizes, obtains, or attempts to realize or obtain, a profit, gain, or advantage for himself or herself or for some other person" by use of their position in public office. *Id.*

In light of a recent ruling by the Rhode Island Superior Court, **this legislation is intended to clarify that public employees that commit sex crimes in connection with their service in state or local government or in the classroom are at least subject to the same penalties as those who steal.** *See Ret. Bd. Of the Employees' Ret. Sys. of Rhode Island v. Pearson*, PC-2024-00941 (R.I. Super. Ct. Apr. 30, 2025).

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or to my Director of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs, Robert Craven, Jr., at [Robert.CravenJr@treasury.ri.gov](mailto:Robert.CravenJr@treasury.ri.gov).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JD' or similar initials, enclosed within a circular flourish.

James A. Diossa  
General Treasurer