

s3064

My name is Jason Romblad, I am a lifelong, unaffiliated voter from Woonsocket. I am writing tonight to voice my opposition to this bill #3064. This bill would allocate \$5 million dollars to the initial phase for a new medical building at URI. There are also future appropriations in this bill anticipated at \$15 million. There is no mention where this money would come from, nor if there would be any interest accrued onto this bill. My position on this matter is based on a taxpaying resident in Rhode Island. Although adding a medical school at URI would be a positive addition, I do not believe you should use taxpayer money to fund the project. This project, along with any other projects at RI colleges, should be blended in with tuition rates. Less than 10% of Rhode Island residents attend Rhode Island colleges. Also, 25% of RI college students are non residents. There is no reason to use our tax dollars for these colleges. This bill requesting \$5 million + \$15 million over the following two years is also in addition to bill #S2830, which will ask the voters to approve \$217 million in bonds, for RI colleges, on the 2026 election ballot. These bonds have averaged an estimated 59% interest payback, over the last 5 election cycles. From 2016-2024 \$1.7 billion in bonds were approved by this RI Legislature and the voters of RI with estimated interest payments of \$1 billion dollars. Therefore, this years bill #S2830 would also accrue approximately \$128 million in interest payments. My state senator in Woonsocket is Melissa Murray and I have asked her to vote against this bill and remove her name as a sponsor. It is unlikely that she will do either. Woonsocket residents are struggling to pay bills, and there are many homeless people in Woonsocket, yet we have this bill, and others, being proposed to spend our tax dollars unnecessarily. This legislature should be doing all it can to reduce the spending of our tax dollars, yet it continues to do the opposite and spend, spend, spend. Please vote against this bill and require college tuition rates to pay for any upgrades or new buildings at these colleges.

Thank you,

Jason Romblad