



Mayor of Providence

Brett P. Smiley

March 5, 2026

The Honorable Jacob Bissaillon, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence RI, 02903

Dear Chair Bissaillon and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I support Senate Bill 2039, *An Act Relating to Taxation – Property Exempt*. If enacted, this legislation would exempt the real and tangible personal property of AS220.

AS220 is an artist-run, Providence-based nonprofit that champions equitable access to the arts for all Rhode Islanders through affordable access to galleries, performance venues, educational opportunities, residential spaces, and work studios. The organization's many facilities provide rare opportunities that support artists' practice and livelihood.

AS220 also delivers inclusive arts education and community engagement programming. The AS220 Youth program offers free creative opportunities emphasizing self-expression and community empowerment for young people. Throughout its over four decades of work, AS220 has become a key part of Providence's cultural vibrancy and is a recognized model for creative placemaking. AS220 serves over 1,000 artists each year and attracts tens of thousands of visitors annually to the Creative Capital.

Like many arts organizations across the country, AS220 is experiencing financial constraints as grant funders shift their priorities away from the arts. With rising operating costs, exempting AS220's property would improve the organization's financial stability and free up much needed resources that can be reinvested in services that might otherwise be at risk.

I thank Senator Kallman for sponsoring Senate Bill 2039 and respectfully urge the committee to vote in favor of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Brett P. Smiley
Mayor