

April 16, 2026

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

RE: SENATE BILL 2260 – AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- BUILDING
BENCHMARKING AND REPORTING ACT OF 2026

Dear Chair Bissaillon and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we are writing to respectfully express our opposition to Senate Bill 2260, which proposes the establishment of an energy and water benchmarking program for large buildings in Rhode Island and the setting of related energy performance standards.

The League fully supports efforts to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability across our communities. We recognize the importance of establishing clear benchmarks to improve energy and water performance, reduce costs, and advance Rhode Island's net-zero mandate. However, we believe the approach outlined in Senate Bill 2260 is premature given the model already proposed under the Governor's budget.

For example, under the Governor's proposed budget (House Budget Bill 7126, Article 3, Section 16), a voluntary energy benchmarking program for public buildings over 25,000 square feet is paired with state-provided technical and financial support. The League strongly supports this model and views it as best practice. It reflects a balanced approach that allows municipalities to participate in statewide energy efficiency initiatives while avoiding the diversion of limited local resources away from essential municipal services.

By contrast, the mandatory framework contemplated in Senate Bill 2260 risks imposing new administrative and operational burdens on municipalities and large building owners without first fully evaluating the effectiveness, implementation challenges, and resource needs associated with benchmarking programs at scale.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to allow the voluntary program included in the Governor's budget to guide statewide implementation efforts before considering mandatory benchmarking requirements. This measured approach will better enable municipalities and stakeholders to assess feasibility, data collection capacity, and cost implications while ensuring alignment with Rhode Island's broader sustainability objectives.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and remain committed to working collaboratively with the General Assembly to advance policies that support environmental responsibility while maintaining municipal feasibility and fiscal sustainability.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Rossi', written in a cursive style.

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of Senate Housing and Municipal Government