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March 4, 2026

The Honorable John Burke
Senate Labor and Gaming Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Burke and Committee Members,

The Northern RI Chamber of Commerce (NRICC) represents businesses in the communities of Burrillville, Central Falls, Cumberland, Foster, Glocester, Johnston, Lincoln, North Providence, North Smithfield, Pawtucket, Scituate, Smithfield and Woonsocket.

The Chamber is writing to express opposition to S.2323, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – The Commuter Transportation Benefits Act. This bill requires employers with 500 or more employees to establish and maintain a pre-tax transportation fringe benefit in accordance with section 132(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. The State of Rhode Island, its agencies, municipalities, existing contract labor agreements and qualifying hardship cases are exempt.

While well meaning, this legislation creates another mandate on the certain members of the business community. To comply with the federal program, a business must meet with each employee to determine whether that employee wishes to participate. If the answer is yes, the employer must work with the employee to determine the amount to be deducted from each paycheck, keep that money separated and review documentation for eligibility each time the employee requests a withdrawal. The employer must keep documentation verifying the employee's proper usage of the benefit. The federal program is voluntary. It recognizes that some businesses may want to provide the benefit to attract employees while other businesses might determine that the benefit does not fit the employees' needs. S.2323 makes no distinction.

The Chamber encourages this committee oppose the passage of S.2323.
Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Monika Zuluaga".

Monika P. Zuluaga
President & CEO