

February 10, 2026

EMAIL ONLY

Hon. John P. Burke
Chairperson, Senate Labor & Gaming Committee
Email: sen-burke@rilegislature.gov

RE: SUPPORT FOR S 2498 LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS—INSPECTION OF PERSONNEL FILES

Dear Chairperson Burke,

This letter is sent by the undersigned in my capacity as Governmental Affairs Counsel for the New England Mechanical Contractors Association (“New England MCA”).¹ New England MCA **supports** this bill, *which would amend the existing personnel file statute by defining what constitutes a personnel record, requiring employers to maintain those records, allowing employees to receive copies upon request, and establishing reasonable retention requirements.* These changes promote transparency, accountability, and fairness, while also providing employers with clear guidance.

Currently there is no requirement that a personnel file be kept, although it is universally kept by Rhode Island employers, and no requirement that an employer produce a copy to an employee. The current statute only allows inspection in the employer’s place of business in front of an employer representative. The proposed amendments essentially mimic Massachusetts’ personnel file statute that has been around for years. In light of the change in the workforce, namely remote work, requiring employees to inspect their personnel records at the place of business instead of allowing the employee the option to have the employer send a copy runs contrary to its intended purpose of the original personnel file statute. Requiring in-person inspection in front of the employer’s representative also dissuades employees from seeking the personnel file for fear of retaliation or possible intimidation.

The proposed amendment also requires employers to maintain personnel files, which although almost universally kept by employers, the current statute does not provide for. Requiring the same and the production of the same to employee not only benefits employers with accurate recordkeeping, but also serves to protect those most vulnerable in our society against discriminatory employment practices consistent with the remedial purposes of the R.I. Fair Employment Practices Act, R.I. Parental & Family Medical Leave Act, and other statutes relating to the terms and conditions of employment, and assists State agencies in charge of investigating and ending those unlawful practices by requiring proper recordkeeping.

For all the foregoing reasons, New England MCA strongly **supports** passage of this legislation.

Very truly yours,



Richard A. Sinapi, ras@sinapilaw.com

RAS/ras

cc: Client (via email only)
Hon. Valarie J. Lawson, Senate President (via email only) (sen-lawson@rilegislature.gov)
Members of Senate Committee on Labor & Gaming (via email only) (Slegislation@rilegislature.gov)

¹ New England MCA represents union signatory commercial and industrial heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and process piping contractors in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. It has over 80 contractor members throughout New England. New England MCA’s Rhode Island members include Aero Mechanical, Inc., Arden Engineering Constructors, LLC, Delta Mechanical, Hart Engineering Corporation, and Nexgen Mechanical. Every New England MCA member is signatory to one or more collective bargaining agreements with the local construction industry trades. Our members have worked as contractors and subcontractors on numerous public and private works projects in Rhode Island, including major construction at URI, Rhode Island Resource Recovery, Providence College, and Amgen. During periods of major commercial construction, New England MCA member contractors may employ as many as 700 Local 51 plumbers and pipefitters in Rhode Island. *The views expressed in this letter do not necessarily represent the position of each individual member.*