



Hon. Joseph Solomon
Chair of the House Committee on Corporations
Members of the House Committee on Corporations

**RE: Support for House Bill #5577
(2025 UTILITY COMPANY BILLING TRANSPARENCY ACT)**

Dear Chairman Craven and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

I write to you as Co-Chair of the Rhode Island Black, Latino, Indigenous, Asian American, and Pacific Islander (RIBLIA) Caucus in strong support of House Bill #5577. Today, our Caucus stands at the largest it's ever been, with 21 members representing communities across our state.

This year, the caucus is prioritizing 15 bills that reflect our unwavering commitment to defending the marginalized and ensuring a fair and equitable future for all Rhode Islanders. **Aligning with our commitment to improving the living and economic conditions of our constituents, the RIBLIA Caucus supports House Bill #5577 by Rep. Cotter which would require utility companies to be more transparent in reporting the explanations and costs associated with rate increases.**

With the rising costs for electricity and natural gas services, more and more Rhode Islanders are struggling to afford their monthly utility bills and are finding themselves in serious utility debt. This issue touches every household and every family in our communities. When utility rates go up, it is not just an inconvenience—it is a burden. It affects our seniors on fixed incomes, our working families already stretching every dollar, and our small businesses striving to keep their doors open. In short, it affects everyone, and they deserve to know *why* their bills are rising.

Transparency is not just about numbers—it is about fairness, accountability, and trust. When utility companies increase rates, consumers should have access to clear, understandable explanations. They deserve to know what factors are driving these increases and how their hard-earned money is being spent. This is why the public needs access to a ratepayer impact analyses (RIA) that would estimate the impact a proposed rate change would have on different customer classes. By including an analysis of the cost-benefit relationship of rate adjustments, particularly how they benefit or disadvantage various sectors, community members will have a better understanding as to what they should expect. House Bill #5577 would accomplish that.

Members of the RIBLIA Caucus urge passage of this bill. Thank you for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DM", written in a cursive style.

Rep. David Morales
Co-Chair RIBLIA Caucus