



May 9, 2024

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Rhode Island House Committee on Finance

RE: HJR 8196 – JOINT RESOLUTION MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$2,000,000 TO THE ELISHA PROJECT

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is George L. Ortiz, Jr., and I am the CEO/President of the ELISHA project. As a disabled Marine Veteran, a resident of Rhode Island, and a father of seven, I stand before you today to express my wholehearted support for HJR8196, a Joint Resolution Making an Appropriation of \$2,000,000 to the ELISHA project.

Since our inception in 2011, the ELISHA project has been dedicated to serving the people of Rhode Island by providing essential resources such as food, furniture, household items, and appliances, all at no cost to those in need. What began as a humble initiative in Metro Providence has since grown to encompass Newport and South County, driven by the ever-increasing demand and our unwavering commitment to supporting our community.

In 2023 alone, the ELISHA project shared over 7 million pounds of food and essential items with Rhode Islanders in need. This staggering number underscores the magnitude of the need within our state and the vital role that the ELISHA project plays in addressing it.

Our impact extends beyond sheer quantity. In 2023, our 24 share markets alone served more than 12,000 families, distributing over 900,000 pounds of food. Additionally, through collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (RIDHS), we made over 10,200 deliveries to individual households and conducted more than 325 bulk deliveries to other non-profit organizations.

To support our operations, we operate warehouses in Pawtucket and Providence, strategically located to facilitate efficient distribution of resources across the state.

However, as the demand for our services continues to grow, so too does the need for adequate resources. The appropriation of \$2,000,000 to the ELISHA Project through HJR8196 would provide invaluable support in sustaining and expanding our operations. These funds would enable us to procure additional food supplies, furniture, household items, and appliances, thereby enhancing our ability to meet the growing needs of our community.

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the
ELISHA
project

Give. Love. Live.

As a disabled Marine Veteran and a proud resident of Rhode Island, I am deeply invested in the well-being of our state and its residents. The ELISHA project represents not only a lifeline for those facing hardship but also a testament to the strength and compassion of our community.

I urge you to consider the profound impact that HJR8196 could have on the lives of countless Rhode Islanders in need. By supporting this appropriation, you will not only be investing in the ELISHA project but also in the future of our state and its people.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



George L. Ortiz, Jr.
CEO/President
the ELISHA project