



**DONALD R. GREBIEN
MAYOR**



May 13, 2024

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: HR 8195 - Support

I am writing to express my strong support for House Resolution 8195, which would appropriate \$150,000 for the Blackstone Valley Visitors Center (BVVC). As the Mayor of Pawtucket, I am acutely aware of the role that the BVVC has in promoting tourism, providing information to visitors to our City, and supporting local businesses.

The BVVC has been a beacon of community engagement and sustainable development since its creation. Over the years, they have tirelessly worked to promote the rich cultural and historical heritage of the Blackstone River Valley. Their work has enriched the lives of our residents and attracted visitors from across the country.

Positioned strategically next to the Old Slater Mill National Historic Park and overlooking prominent City landmarks, the BVVC serves as a central hub for tourism and commerce in Pawtucket. Its significance is amplified amidst the dynamic economic surge currently sweeping through Pawtucket. As the region anticipates an exciting influx of visitors from the Tidewater Landing project, the new train station, and other development projects, there's a pressing need for an adequately funded visitors center. Passing this legislation will allow us to meet the heightened demand and ensure a seamless visitor experience.

By investing in the BVVC, we are not only investing in our City's future but in the shared prosperity of the Blackstone Valley Region and the State as a whole. The proposed appropriation of \$150,000 will ensure that the BVVC can continue to fulfill its mission.

I urge you to pass H 8195. By doing so, we make progress in building a stronger, more vibrant community that celebrates its rich heritage and welcomes visitors with open arms.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Grebien

Cc: Members of the House Finance Committee