



State of Rhode Island

Department of State | Office of the Secretary of State

Gregg M. Amore, *Secretary of State*

May 15, 2024

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance

RE: In support of HJR8033 - A Joint Resolution Making an Appropriation of \$150,000 to the Women's Fund of Rhode Island

Dear Chair Abney,

I write this letter in support of House Resolution 8033, an appropriation of \$150,000 to the Women's Fund of Rhode Island, whose mission is to achieve gender equity through systemic change.

As Secretary of State, one of my top priorities has been to expand the Department of State's civic education programming by establishing partnerships with middle and high schools across the state, including classroom visits, mock elections, and the Civic Liaison Program for students. Our goal with these programs is to encourage greater civic engagement from our youth, as we believe all young people deserve meaningful civic engagement opportunities that provide them with an array of civic knowledge, skills, and experiences.

The Women's Fund of Rhode Island has a strong record of advocating for increased civic participation by women and girls. Organizations like the Women's Fund of Rhode Island also help bridge the gender gap in various ways – through research, advocacy, grant-making, and strategic partnerships that will encourage and enhance gender equity and civic engagement.

Women and girls comprise 51% of our population and workforce, yet they experience significant gender wage, wealth, health, and leadership gaps compared to their male counterparts. Currently, less than 1.9% of philanthropy is earmarked specifically for women and girls, and less than 1% for women and girls of color. Ensuring a State appropriation for the Women's Fund of Rhode Island will guarantee that their hard and critical work continues.

I urge this Committee to support and invest in the Women's Fund of Rhode Island, as they are a key leader in our state for championing public policies that benefit women and families that aid in the fight towards achieving gender equity.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michelle Arias, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, at marias@sos.ri.gov.

Sincerely,

Gregg M. Amore
Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Karen Alzate

State House, Room 218, Providence, RI 02903

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