



State of Rhode Island

**Department of State | Office of the Secretary of State**

**Gregg M. Amore, Secretary of State**

May 21, 2024

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair  
House Committee on Finance

RE: House Bill 8267 – An Act Relating to Taxation – Sales and Use Taxes – Liability and Computation – Local Meals and Beverage Tax

Dear Chair Abney,

I write this letter to comment on the pivotal work carried out by the Rhode Island Semiquincentennial (RI250) Commission and my role within this body in relation to proposed House Bill 8267, legislation that proposes designating revenue to fund the RI250 Commission.

With the upcoming semiquincentennial celebrating 250 years of our nation's inception, my office is committed to engaging Rhode Islanders during this historic milestone as we organize programming and events with the RI250 Commission that will recognize Rhode Island as a founding colony.

The RI250 Commission, created by a joint resolution by the General Assembly, is dedicated to commemorating Rhode Island's crucial role in shaping the ideals of freedom, equality, and independence throughout American history by coordinating events and curriculum that celebrate the diverse individuals who have contributed to the state's rich heritage. On behalf of the Commission, the Department of State requested an increase in its appropriation for FY2025 to \$500,000.

Over the next two years, the RI250 Commission is focused on making Rhode Islanders aware of the Semiquincentennial in 2026. Central to this mission is facilitating comprehensive planning endeavors across all thirty-nine municipalities, facilitating the symbolic planting of commemorative Liberty Trees, and fostering the development of academic resources that portray Rhode Island's multifaceted history. Moreover, historic state-wide events, such as an iconic Tall Ships gathering at Narragansett Bay, will be organized to commemorate Rhode Island's historical significance and bolster public engagement leading up to this national milestone.

I support an increase in funding for the RI250 Commission. Additional resources will ensure Rhode Island's celebrations encourage civic participation and historical tourism.

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](mailto:marias@sos.ri.gov).

Sincerely,

Gregg M. Amore  
Secretary of State

cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance  
The Honorable June Speakman

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