



Rhode Island Black Business Association
220 Smith Street | Providence, RI 02908

02 May 2024

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance
housefinance@rilegislature.gov

Testimony *in support of* Bill 7338: Revenue for Rhode Islanders (Rep Karen Alzate)

Chair Abney and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

The Rhode Island Black Business Association represents a membership of hundreds of entrepreneurs, small business owners, and employers across Rhode Island. We support Representative Alzate's bill, H7338. It provides revenue for essential investments in the state's economic health and business development in the fairest way possible.

This bill will generate an additional \$126M in revenues through a 3% surtax on millionaires living in Rhode Island; literal millionaires. The current rate for this bracket is 5.99%; the proposal does not completely undo the unfunded tax break millionaires received in 2006. This surtax would impact less than 0.4% of all filers in Rhode Island. However, the lack of revenues for infrastructure maintenance, education funding, and affordable childcare harms the overwhelming majority of Rhode Islanders. This is especially true for small business owners.

Businesses, especially locally-owned small businesses, cannot succeed in a state with crumbling infrastructure, underfunded education systems, and limited access to child care, either because of exorbitant cost or lack of providers. For example, a small business owner reported losing \$50,000 in one month due to the Washington Bridge closure, a massive disaster that will take nearly two years to fix. This whole crisis happened not due to one administration in particular, but because of decades of underinvestment. Taking no action to address the lack of revenue will only result in further disasters down the line.

RIBBA urges the General Assembly to support this bill which fairly and consistently ensures that essential public goods and services remain available and safely operational. The larger impact will be a better business climate and stronger economy overall. Please give this bill your full support and send it to the full House with a recommendation of passage. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristina A Fox". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Kristina Contreras Fox
Director of Policy
(401) 424-1635
kristina@ri-bba.org



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