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May 21, 2024

Hon. Marvin Abney
Chair
House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for H-7913; Relating to Education – Foundation Level School Support

Dear Chair Abney,

BuildRI is a domestic non-profit trade association comprised of four (4) contractor associations (the Labor Relations Division of the RI Chapter of the Associated General Contractors, the New England Mechanical Contractors' Ass'n, the RI Mason Contractors' Ass'n, and the RI and Southeast MA Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors' Ass'n), and seventeen (17) Local Trade Unions comprised of approximately 10,000 local tradesmen and women. On behalf of our organization, I write to **SUPPORT** the above referred to legislation for the reasons that follow.

This legislation helps Rhode Island's school construction be spaced out over a longer time. While this legislation extends the current deadline for school districts to receive the additional bonus points for higher State reimbursement percentage, this extension **will not** give new projects access to those same bonus points; just school construction proposals who have previously meant RIDE approval. This extension will allow municipalities more time to effectively design their school construction projects, as well as helping with the procurement of contractors to build these school facilities. Currently, there is over one billion dollars in school construction about to take place in Rhode Island. Our construction management partners are concerned about their financial capacity to bid on multiple school constructions at the time, which shrinks the pool of potential bidders. A restriction in the amount of construction bidders on a project could cause increases in a project's costs, which in turn could cause the school district to delay construction as they redesign their facilities for cost-cutting purposes.

BuildRI, and our partners in the unionized construction industry urge to pass this legislation so your communities can efficiently and effectively build the next generation of schools for our students.

Thank you for your attention to this correspondence. Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anthony J. Cherry".

Anthony Cherry
Assistant Executive Director
Build Rhode Island