

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

To: The Honorable Marvin L. Abney  
Chair, House Finance Committee

RE: Support for FY26 Economic Development Article, Innovation Initiatives

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I am writing on behalf of the RIH Orthopaedic Foundation in support of the sunset extension of the Innovation Initiatives Act under FY26 Economic Development Article and request that the Committee consider allocating funding for this line item.

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit that assists companies with research and development of medical devices, we have seen firsthand the profound and lasting impact of the Innovation Initiatives. Last year we were approved as the Knowledge Provider for a \$75,000 Innovation Voucher awarded to Mighty Well, a medical wearables company that is disrupting the status quo in vascular access care. While the novel research studies we are now conducting will first and foremost provide Mighty Well with the data needed to support its R&D and sales initiatives, their impact will ripple outward. Through the work funded by this single Innovation Voucher, our organization will gain invaluable experience and develop new capabilities that can then be leveraged to help additional Rhode Island-based companies grow and thrive.

From our perspective, one of the main reasons why the Rhode Island innovation ecosystem is currently thriving is because investments have been made not just in entrepreneurs and startups, but in the infrastructure that supports them. Initiatives like the Innovation Voucher Program are foundational pillars of that infrastructure, so losing them would not only jeopardize the future growth and development of the state's economy but threaten to undo the incredible progress that has already been made.

Therefore, I urge the Committee to support the sunset extension of the Innovation Initiatives and consider allocating funding to the Innovation programs for next fiscal year.

Respectfully,

Rachel Schilkowsky  
Engineering Project Manager  
RIH Orthopaedic Foundation



[rihof.org](http://rihof.org)



1 Hoppin Street, Coro West Suite 404, Providence, RI 02903



401-444-4414



[Connect](#)