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Chief Sidney Wordell, Ret.

March 20, 2024

The Honorable Robert Craven, Sr.
Chairman, House Committee on Judiciary
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: House Bill No. H7972 Relating to Criminal Offense – Public Utilities

Dear Chairman Craven:

I am writing on behalf of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association (RIPCA) to voice our **support** for the House bill referenced above, which would expand the crime of false reporting to include shootings or other dangerous events.

The proposed legislation recognizes a loophole in the current statute that doesn't account for the false reporting of a shooting, existence of explosives or dangerous substances, to cause terror, anxiety, unrest or fear which causes a law enforcement response. Individuals or groups that make such assertions do so without regard to the safety and welfare of first responding officers and the public we serve.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this written testimony on behalf of the RIPCA and as always, I am available for any follow-up questions you or the committee may have and we are willing to continue discussions with the bill's sponsors.

Respectfully submitted,

Chief Sidney Wordell (ret.)
Executive Director
Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association