



## **RHODE ISLAND SUPREME COURT**

*Office of General Counsel*

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April 4, 2024

*Via Electronic Mail (HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)*

The Honorable Robert E. Craven

House Judiciary Committee

Rhode Island General Assembly

House Lounge

Providence, RI 02903

**Re: House Bill #7976: An Act Relating to Courts and Civil Procedure - Courts -  
Conditional Escheat of Unclaimed Funds in Court Registries**

Dear Chairman Craven:

I write on behalf of the Rhode Island Judiciary to express our support for House Bill S#7976, scheduled to be heard and considered this evening before the House Judiciary Committee. This legislation would amend R. I. Gen Laws § 8-12-1 and § 8-12-2 to allow the State Court Administrator to transfer funds held by the Supreme Court's Finance Department to the General Treasurer's Office as unclaimed funds after one (1) year, as opposed to the current five (5) years. Once escheated to the General Treasurer, the unclaimed funds are listed publicly and held in the general fund as unclaimed property, during which time any person who claims a right to the funds may file a claim to seek possession of the unclaimed funds.

This legislation would also amend R. I. Gen Laws § 8-12-3. This section relates to funds held by the Court by virtue of an order from the Court requiring the parties to a civil action post a sum of money while the litigation is pending. The amendment extends the time by which a party may seek award of the funds from three (3) years to ten (10) years. Lastly, the Judiciary will be requesting a Substitute A regarding the section of the bill that removes the earning of interest. The removal of the accrual of interest provisions was in error and should remain in the statute.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Judiciary's support for this bill. I am available should you have any questions or wish to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Kelly  
General Counsel