



CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY

## Department of People and Culture

Paul A. N. Winspeare, MBA, SPHR, PHR, aPHR, M.:  
**Chief People Officer**

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February 12, 2025

Representative Arthur Corvese  
Chair, House Labor Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith St  
Providence, RI, 02903

Dear Chairman Corvese, and honorable members of the Committee

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 5132, *An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Workplace Psychological Safety Act*. If passed, this bill's intent would be to prohibit psychological abuse in the workplace inflicted by an employer upon an employee or by a co-worker upon another employee, ensuring a physically and psychologically safe work environment.

While the intent of this legislation is understandable, its overly broad language leaves significant room for interpretation in application. As a result, the City would likely face continuous legal challenges, numerous liabilities, and an influx of frivolous lawsuits. Implementing this bill would require the City to develop new policies, extensive training programs, and strong safeguards to prevent misuse of allegations amid the ambiguity such legislation presents.

Additionally, the bill presents several critical concerns:

1. **Burden of Proof** – The legislation does not outline how employers can determine that psychological abuse has occurred or what level of evidence is required to substantiate claims.
2. **Medical Documentation and Claims Review** – There is no guidance on the documentation necessary to support a claim or how the claims review process should be conducted to ensure compliance.
3. **Preventive Measures and Legal Risks** – The bill does not define sufficient preventive actions, which could create significant liability risks for employers. Without clear criteria, enforcement could become inconsistent, leading to further litigation.

While I appreciate the bill's intent, this approach is not an effective solution for ensuring psychological health in the workplace. I respectfully urge the Committee to vote *No* on House Bill 5132.

Sincerely,

Paul Winspeare, MBA, SPHR, PHR, aPHR

Chief People Officer

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