

March 18, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley, Chair
House State Government and Elections
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5312 – RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- LOCAL CANVASSING AUTHORITIES

Chair Shanley and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 5312, which seeks to enhance transparency and efficiency in municipal election administration.

This legislation would establish clear procedures for filling vacancies in municipal election offices by requiring party chairpersons to submit lists of party voters within thirty (30) days of a vacancy notice and requiring the mayor or council president to nominate a replacement within thirty (30) days of receipt of those lists. Additionally, it would clarify term expiration dates for canvassing authority members and alternates, ensuring compliance with state law. The bill further directs city and town clerks to correct any term expiration discrepancies immediately.

Moreover, House Bill 5312 provides important clarity regarding the designation of a chief local election official and an alternate, ensuring proper oversight and continuity in local election administration. By establishing that the chief local election official is the sole agent authorized to request user access to the statewide central voter register, this bill strengthens security measures and streamlines voter registration management.

These updates will improve consistency, transparency, and accountability in local election processes, benefiting municipalities across Rhode Island.

We appreciate the General Assembly's commitment to strengthening election administration and urge your support for this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House State Government and Elections Committee