



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND JUDICIARY

SUPREME COURT
OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

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Providence, RI 02903

March 31, 2026

Via Electronic Mail (SenateJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)

Chairman Matthew LaMountain
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Rhode Island State House
Room 313
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Senate Bill #2052: An Act Relating to Courts and Civil Procedure - Procedure Generally - Jury Lists

Dear Chairman LaMountain:

I write on behalf of the Rhode Island Judiciary to respectfully express concerns regarding Senate Bill #2052 scheduled to be heard this evening before the Senate Committee on Judiciary. If enacted, this legislation would exempt persons seventy (70) years of age and older from serving as jurors on a grand jury or jury trial in the Rhode Island courts.

Jurors perform a vital function in the American justice system. The protection of individual rights and liberties is largely dependent on the participation of the public as jurors in criminal and civil trials. Members of the public are also vital to the criminal charging process as participants in the grand jury. National studies consistently show a diverse jury—one which brings a wide range of demographics, expertise, and life experiences—deliberates longer, discusses more facts, and lessens the impact of individual and unintentional biases. Jurors who are seventy years of age and older bring a vast array of experience and wisdom to the jury room. They are essential to a functioning jury system. The passage of this bill will exacerbate the challenges already present in finding a diverse set of individuals available to serve as a juror.

Lastly, a blanket exemption is unnecessary. The Jury Commissioner routinely exempts individuals from jury service in the event an individual has a hardship, or health, medical, or personal impediments to jury service.

I ask the Senate Committee on Judiciary to carefully consider the impact of this bill on the Rhode Island jury system, an essential element to our justice system.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Judiciary's concerns regarding this bill.

Sincerely,

Chrisanne Wyrzykowski

Chrisanne Wyrzykowski
General Counsel