

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF PORTSMOUTH, RHODE ISLAND RESOLUTION #2026-02-25 B, REQUESTING LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO CLARIFY AND REAFFIRM STATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUBLIC BOATING ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE, AND REQUESTING SIMILAR LEGISLATIVE ACTION RELATING TO PUBLIC BOATING ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED WITHIN THE TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN**

**WHEREAS**, access to Rhode Island's coastal and inland waters is a vital public resource that supports recreation, commercial activity, tourism, marine safety, and the State's maritime heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, public boating access infrastructure—including but not limited to boat ramps, docks, piers, floats, bulkheads, and other in-water structures—is essential to ensuring safe, equitable, and practical access to navigable waters for residents and visitors alike; and

**WHEREAS**, many such public boating access facilities located throughout the State, including facilities situated on property within the Town of Charlestown, are owned by the State of Rhode Island or subject to State contractual obligations for operation, maintenance, or repair; and

**WHEREAS**, ambiguity regarding responsibility for the maintenance, repair, and capital replacement of public boating access infrastructure has resulted, in some locations, in deferred maintenance, deterioration of facilities, reduced public access, and potential risks to public safety; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council of the Town of Portsmouth, Rhode Island adopted Resolution #2026-02-25 B, entitled "*A Resolution Requesting Legislative Action to Clarify and Reaffirm State Responsibility for Public Boating Access Infrastructure*," recognizing the statewide nature of this issue and requesting corrective legislative action; and

**WHEREAS**, the concerns identified by the Town of Portsmouth are similarly applicable to public boating access infrastructure located in the Town of Charlestown, including facilities where the State retains ownership, regulatory jurisdiction, or contractual responsibility for maintenance and repair; and

**WHEREAS**, municipalities lack the legal authority and financial capacity to assume responsibility for State-owned or State-obligated marine infrastructure without clear statutory direction and dedicated funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the long-term stewardship of public boating access infrastructure requires predictable, adequate, and sustainable funding mechanisms to support routine maintenance, major repairs, and capital replacement; and

**WHEREAS**, clarification and reaffirmation of State responsibility would promote safer facilities, protect municipal taxpayers, preserve public access, and ensure consistent management of public boating infrastructure statewide;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND, THAT:**

**1. Support for Portsmouth Resolution.**

The Town Council of the Town of Charlestown hereby expresses its full support for the Town Council of the Town of Portsmouth Resolution #2026-02-25 B, and concurs with its request for legislative action to clarify and reaffirm the State of Rhode Island's responsibility for public boating access infrastructure.

**2. Request for Legislative Action Applicable to Charlestown.**

The Town Council respectfully requests that the Rhode Island General Assembly enact legislation to clarify, affirm, and strengthen the State's responsibility to maintain, repair, and, where necessary, replace public boating access infrastructure—including boat ramps, docks, piers, and other in-water structures—where the State retains ownership or contractual responsibility on property located within the Town of Charlestown.

**3. Statewide and Sustainable Funding Mechanism.**

Such legislation should include the establishment of a dedicated, reliable, and sustainable State funding mechanism to support capital repairs, ongoing maintenance, and long-term stewardship of public boating access infrastructure throughout the State, including facilities located in Charlestown.

**4. Protection of Municipal Interests.**

The requested legislation should ensure that municipalities are not held financially or legally responsible for State-owned or State-obligated public boating access infrastructure absent an express agreement and corresponding funding.

**5. Distribution.**

The Town Clerk is authorized and directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to the Governor of the State of Rhode Island, the President of the Rhode Island Senate, the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, members of the Charlestown legislative delegation, and the Town Council of the Town of Portsmouth.

**ADOPTED** by the Town Council of the Town of Charlestown, Rhode Island, on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2026.

ATTEST:

Amy Rose Weinreich CMC  
Amy Rose Weinreich, Town Clerk

