Rhode Island Legislative Update
MARCH 2019

State News:
The Senate Leadership recently released a document titled “Building a More vibrant Rhode Island – Economic Development related priorities”. This is a two year initiative and will include a number of bills covering a diverse range of issues including:
- Development barriers
- Increased workforce training
- Providing housing options and incentives for solar energy
- Focus on core industries and businesses
- Address small business community
- Speed up building inspections
- Analysis of reimbursement rates for health care providers

While it is a most ambitious agenda, several portions of it are of great concern to our business sector and non-union businesses. A number of bills could impact RILBMDA member and their customer base. Bills introduced to date include the following:

Issues Update:
This bill allows contractors to hire a third-party to perform inspections in the event the municipal building inspector fails to perform an inspection within 48 hours of notification that the contractor is ready for inspection. The contractor would pay the costs for this inspection. The bill also allows contractors to use a state inspector at which point the municipality would pay for the inspector – we assume the contractor would pay the municipality as they do today. Third party inspections have helped in other states.

S.713, An Act Relating to Property and Works – Labor and Payment of Debts by Contractors
Section 2 places a requirement on all school building projects valued at $5 million or more to use apprentices for 15% of the work hours in each discipline. This provision eliminates merit shop (non-union) contractors from bidding on the projects. When put together with the draconian apprenticeship/journeyman ratios governing Rhode Island, merit shops will not be able to have enough employees to meet the 15% apprenticeship requirement. Passage of this means fewer bidders on these projects, less competition and higher prices to the citizens of Rhode Island.

S.725, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Mechanical Trade
Adds thermal systems insulation workers, apprentices, journeypersons, contractors and masters to the mechanical trades' regulation chapter of the general laws.

Events:
RILBMDA's annual lobby day will be held on May 22 at the R.I. State House, where the industry will be tackling a number of labor related bills. Lobby day will be followed by the RILBMDA monthly dinner meeting. If you are interested in attending, please contact Jamie McCormick at jmccormick@nrla.org.

Questions?
Please contact Kirk Ives, Director of Government Affairs at 518-880-6376 or kives@nrla.org.