



First Congressional District Year-End Report 2015

Congressman

DAVID N. CICILLINE

Proudly Representing the 1st District of Rhode Island



Photo Credit: Doug Kerr

Foreword from Congressman Cicilline

Dear Friend,

As 2015 draws to a close I am extraordinarily grateful for the opportunity you have given me to represent you in the Congress of the United States. I have spent the last year standing up for things that matter to Rhode Islanders and fighting to make government more accountable and responsive to constituent needs.

It's no secret that Washington is broken. Special interests often are more powerful and have more influence than the voices and priorities of ordinary Americans. That is why I am pressing for legislation to reform the campaign finance system and reduce the influence of big money in our elections.



There are many examples of this corrosive influence of money on our political system. For example, in the United States we pay more for prescription drugs than any other nation in the world and countless families are forced to pay out of pocket or go without important life-saving medications. The system is deeply flawed. I am working with my colleagues to take on big pharma and to take action to address this crisis and ultimately reduce costs.

I am also focused on ensuring that Rhode Island's seniors have access to the benefits they have earned, and fight every attempt to infringe on vital programs like Medicare and Social Security. Our country, and our state, succeeds when we ensure the next generation has opportunities for education and advancement that is why I have fought efforts to cut Pell grants and introduced legislation to make higher education more accessible.

This year Congress passed a long-overdue multi-year highway and transit law called the FAST Act (Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act). Rhode Island is set to receive an estimated \$231.7 million a year in federal funding for roads and bridges and another \$39 million per year for mass transit programs. While imperfect, I supported this legislation because it is a significant improvement over the year-to-year patchwork of funding that we've been working under since 2009. This legislation will create jobs rebuilding Rhode Island's crumbling bridges and roads.

I want to be sure that my constituents are aware of the work I am doing on their behalf to fight for critical policies in Washington and ensure that my office is making the federal government more responsive to their needs. The following report outlines some of the work my office has done over the past year in four key areas: getting Rhode Islanders back to work, promoting efficient government, bringing federal resources to Rhode Island, and leading on critical policy issues.

Getting Rhode Islanders Back to Work

When Rhode Islanders are given the opportunity to compete on a level playing field, our workers do their jobs better than any competitor. In 2015, I took several actions that will help create new jobs in our state:

- Introduced and passed the **Brickle Amendment** into law, requiring the Departments of Defense and State to ensure that American manufacturers have the ability to compete for large contracts overseas. This year, the Brickle Group, the company that helped raise awareness about the importance of transparency in government procurement, was awarded a \$29.3 million contract by the Defense Department, allowing the local company to double their staffing in the division that will fulfill this contract.
- Worked with Republican Congressman Steve Chabot to introduce and pass the **Small Business Investment Company Capital Act** through the House to expand access to capital for small businesses.
- Successfully advocated **increase funding for Rhode Island infrastructure to \$270 million** on average each year in the bipartisan, multi-year transportation bill, helping to create jobs that will rebuild our crumbling roads and bridges and make significant long-term investments in public transportation.
- Introduced the **21st Century Buy American Act** with U.S. Senator Chris Murphy to promote the purchase of goods manufactured in the United States.
- In June, successfully pressed the U.S. Department of Labor to award Rhode Island a **\$5.25 million competitive grant** to improve workforce training efforts and provide employees with the skills they need to compete in our global economy.
- Successfully fought to reauthorize the **Export-Import Bank** that has provided more than \$20 million in insured shipments, guaranteed credit, or disbursed loans for Rhode Island companies over eight years.

Efficiency in Government

Rhode Islanders deserve a government that actively reaches out to hear their concerns and to provide information about available resources and helps them cut through red tape. In 2015, I worked to make the federal government more accountable and responsive to Rhode Islanders:

- **Assisted with 1,437 constituent requests for casework**, including help with Social Security benefits, IRS tax refunds, health care services, and more.
- Hosted a **Senior Resources Fair** to connect more than 200 Rhode Island seniors and caregivers with more than 50 organizations that provide important services and resources for seniors.
- Held my first **Town Hall for the Next Generation** to discuss directly with young people the issues important to Rhode Islanders ages 18-35.
- Conducted open office hours in all 19 cities and towns in the District to meet one-on-one with constituents to hear their concerns through my **#ReachOut19 initiative**.
- **Responded to 20,883 letters and emails** from constituents.

Delivering Federal Resources for Rhode Island

One of the most important aspects of my job is to bring federal funds back to the District and make sure Rhode Island gets its fair share of what we send to Washington. In 2015:

- Helped deliver **\$335.5 million** in federal funding Rhode Island.
- I requested **\$5.25 million** from the U.S. Department of Labor to support workforce training in Rhode Island – this funding was awarded to our state in June.

- Advocated successfully for **\$927,000** that will provide full funding next year for the Blackstone Valley National Historical Park, which I helped establish last year.
- Succeeded in blocking an amendment that would have cut millions of dollars in research funding for Rhode Island through the National Science Foundation's **Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR)**.
- Protected **\$8.5 million** in annual funding for RIPTA during negotiations on the federal highway funding bill.

Leading on Critical Policy Issues

With our country facing serious challenges, it's critical that we work towards developing innovative solutions that will keep America moving in the right direction. That's why, in 2015, I:

- Led efforts in the House to include **new afterschool initiatives** in the 2015 education bill.
- Continued to advocate for policies that will address the urgent issue of **rising and unregulated costs of prescription drugs** so that everyday Americans can afford critical, life-saving medication.
- Introduced legislation that will **fix our broken campaign finance system** and ensure that the voices of ordinary Americans are not drowned out by the influence of big money and special interest in our elections.
- Introduced the **Equality Act** to prohibit discrimination against LGBT Americans and guarantee them the same rights and responsibilities as everyone else.
- Introduced the **Assault Weapons Ban of 2015** to reduce gun violence by keeping firearms that were designed for a battlefield out of our communities.
- Introduce the bipartisan **ETHICS Act** to require that all Members of Congress undergo annual ethics training.
- Introduced the **Automatic Voter Registration Act** to ensure all eligible Americans have an opportunity to make their voices heard in our democracy.

Rest assured, I will continue to move forward on these priorities. The progress we have made would never be possible if it weren't for the active support and engagement I have received from citizens in Rhode Island's First District. I want to sincerely thank you for the work that you do. It is an honor to serve on your behalf.

Warm regards,



David Cicilline
Member of Congress

Putting Rhode Islanders Back to Work

Over the past year, Rhode Island has made real progress creating jobs and getting its economy back on the right track. The rate of unemployment dropped by 20% over the past year as 8,000 new jobs were created for working men and women. It's critical to continue building on this momentum, which is why Congressman Cicilline has been working to advance policies that will support additional job creation.

Brickle Amendment

In 2014, Woonsocket-based manufacturer Sam Brickle contacted Congressman Cicilline that American companies were put at a competitive disadvantage because the Department of Defense was not required to notify them about overseas military contracts and opportunities. In particular, the Brickle Group, which, among other things, produces berets for the U.S. Armed Forces and uniforms for the Department of Homeland Security, would be well-positioned to compete for new business opportunities under a more transparent process.

During consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act, Congressman Cicilline offered "**the Brickle Amendment,**" in order to create new transparency requirements by obligating the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of State to document their efforts to engage American manufacturers in certain procurement opportunities to equip Afghan National Security Forces.



Congressman Cicilline with Woonsocket-based manufacturers Sam and Max Brickle

The Brickle Amendment was adopted to the National Defense Authorization Act that President Obama signed into law this November. This amendment will improve opportunities for the Brickle Group and other Rhode Island manufacturers to expand their operations and create new, good-paying jobs. This spring, the Brickle Group was awarded a \$29.3 million contract by the Defense Department, allowing them to double their staffing in the division that will fulfill this contract.

Small Business Investment Company Capital Act

Small businesses make up the backbone of Rhode Island's economy and it is critical to ensure they have access to the capital they need to expand their workforce and grow our economy.

The Small Business Investment Capital (SBIC) program, which was first established in 1958, is a public-private partnership that ensures that American small businesses have access to a steady flow of long-term capital. In 2013, 1,068 small businesses received financing through the SBIC program, with 30% of these businesses being in either low-to-moderate income areas, or minority- or women-owned small businesses.

In 2015, Congressman Cicilline worked with Republican Small Business Committee Chairman Steve Chabot to introduce **the Small Business Investment Company Capital Act (H.R. 1023)**. This bill, which passed the House in July, will expand the amount of outstanding leverage available to commonly-controlled Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs) through the Small Business Administration (SBA) by \$125 million, at no additional cost to taxpayers. When it is signed into law, the Small Business Investment Company Capital Act will ensure Rhode Island companies have the resources they need.

21st Century Buy American Act

For decades, loopholes in federal law have allowed government agencies to avoid Buy American requirements that are supposed to strengthen domestic manufacturing by requiring the purchase of products made in America.

Congressman Cicilline introduced **the 21st Century Buy American Act (H.R. 3670)** in order to make much-needed improvements so that American companies enjoy better opportunities to compete for contracts with the federal government. As a longtime hub of manufacturing, Rhode Island would especially benefit from the passage of this commonsense proposal.

The 21st Century Buy American Act will limit loopholes that allow government to avoid Buy American requirements. These loopholes or “public interest waivers” were originally intended to be used when an American-made good is unavailable or if the cost of a product or service is prohibitively high. Current loopholes in Buy American legislation allow agencies to exploit this provision, leaving American manufacturers behind. Under the 21st Century Buy American Act, government agencies will no longer be allowed to use a public interest waiver without considering the long and short-term effects it would have on U.S. employment.

The 21st Century Buy American Act will also provide resources for U.S. manufacturers of items in short supply to help them compete against foreign manufacturers for U.S. government contracts. It creates new investments in new and existing manufacturers of non-available items or manufacturers who are the only domestic manufacturer of a specific item, ensuring that these companies crucial to our nation’s industrial base receive the assistance they need to continue making items that are scarce in America. The bill will also increase the domestic content percentage requirement from 50% to 60% so that companies are required to produce a majority of their materials in the U.S. in order for their product to qualify as American-made.

Export-Import Bank

The Export-Import Bank is a critical tool for Rhode Island small businesses, as it provides significant financial resources that allow American companies to expand into overseas markets while creating jobs at home.

Over the last eight years, the Export-Import Bank provided more than \$20 million in insured shipments, guaranteed credit, or disbursed loans



Urging reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank

for Rhode Island companies. In 2014, it supported 164,000 American jobs while generating \$675 million for taxpayers. Its default rate stands at just 0.175%.

And after Republican leaders in Washington declined to reauthorize, and ultimately attempted to kill the Export-Import Bank, Congressman Cicilline joined a bipartisan discharge petition to force a vote to reauthorize this critical institution – the first successful discharge petition in more than a decade.

In October, the House voted to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank against the wishes of Republican leaders. It was then passed by the Senate and signed into law by the President. The Export-Import Bank finally opened again for business.

Promoting Efficiency in Government

All Rhode Islanders deserve a government that is smart, effective, and knows how to get things done for the people it serves. Elected officials should engage the public, provide information about available resources, and help cut through bureaucratic red tape to deliver results.

Constituent Casework

Congressman Cicilline's office includes full-time caseworkers who worked to resolve more than 1,400 requests for assistance with federal agencies from constituents in 2015. These requests included help with Social Security benefits, IRS tax refunds, and life-saving medical treatment. Below are a few examples of successful casework resolutions in 2015:

- **Claire Sarault**, a resident of Lincoln, contacted Congressman Cicilline's office to request assistance with her husband Mike's enrollment in HealthSource RI. His account had been held up because of a data error, and he was going without vital medication and important health care appointments as a result. After Congressman Cicilline's staff contacted HealthSource RI, the error in Mike's account was corrected and he was properly enrolled.
- **Walter Reis and his wife**, residents of North Providence, emailed Congressman Cicilline's office when they did not receive their tax refund in the Spring and the IRS was unable to locate the money. After Congressman Cicilline's staff contacted the IRS, the refund was deposited into the account.
- **Jose Monteiro**, resident of North Providence, reached out to Congressman Cicilline's office because he was being denied social security disability benefits due to errors in the case after three years of applying and appealing. Congressman Cicilline's office was able to fix those mistakes in the application process, get his appeals hearing expedited, and his application approved.
- A Navy veteran, **Louis Lefort**, reached out to Congressman Cicilline's office in order to change the status of his discharge, which he understood to be General Under Honorable Conditions. After reviewing Louis's paperwork, Congressman Cicilline's office ascertained that he had actually received a full Honorable Discharge at the time his service concluded. After 44 years, Louis was finally able to rest assured that his service was validated.

Rhode Islanders interested in learning more about the services Congressman Cicilline's casework staff can provide should call 729-5600.

Senior Resources Fair

In June, Congressman Cicilline hosted his fourth annual Senior Resources Fair at the East Providence Senior Center.

More than 200 Rhode Island seniors and caregivers attended to meet directly with more than 50 organizations that provide resources and services for seniors, including the Rhode Island Division of Elderly Affairs, the Social Security Administration, and Rhode Island Housing. Members of Congressman Cicilline’s casework staff were also in attendance to field questions regarding requests for assistance with federal agencies.



Hosting a Town Hall for the Next Generation

Town Hall for the Next Generation

Young people are statistically the least likely to engage in the political process – not just in Rhode Island but across the entire country. In 2012, just 45% of 18 to 29-year olds voted in the presidential election, compared to 72% of those ages 65 and older.

In November, Congressman Cicilline hosted a Town Hall for the Next Generation to meet with Rhode Islanders ages 18-35 and talk with them about the issues important to millennials in our state.

More than 200 people attended this discussion and more than 100 watched live on Periscope. Attendees shared their concerns about the cost of higher education, job creation, climate change, LGBT equality, criminal justice reform, and other issues important in their lives.

#ReachOut19

From September until December, Congressman Cicilline hosted open office hours in all 19 cities and towns across Rhode Island’s First District. The #ReachOut19 initiative provided constituents with an opportunity to share their thoughts directly with Congressman Cicilline on the challenges facing Rhode Island, as well as a chance to learn more about the services his office provides. Dozens of Rhode Islanders were able to attend #ReachOut19 events across the First District and meet one-on-one with Congressman Cicilline in a setting convenient to them.



Meeting constituents during #ReachOut19 in Cumberland

Constituent Communications

Providing constituents with information about issues in Washington, available government resources, and other concerns is a priority for any Congressional office.

In 2015, Congressman Cicilline responded to 20,883 letters and emails, and also made 48,263 engagements through Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

Congressman Cicilline's office also scheduled 79 tours of the U.S. Capitol for Rhode Islanders visiting Washington, arranged 30 tours of the White House for constituents, and provided 26 young people with the opportunity to work as Congressional interns in Pawtucket and Washington. Congressman Cicilline also nominated six Rhode Island high school students to attend a United States Service Academy.

Delivering Federal Resources

In 2015, Congressman Cicilline worked to ensure Rhode Island's First District received \$335.5 million federal funding. This money helps create jobs, support economic growth, rebuild our infrastructure, and create new opportunities for middle class families who are working to get ahead. Below are a few examples of how Congressman Cicilline helped ensure Rhode Island receives its share of federal funding.

Workforce Training

Congressman Cicilline supported the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's application for funding to support the Real Jobs Rhode Island workforce training initiative, and in June the U.S. Department of Labor announced that Rhode Island would receive \$5.25 million in funding.

Real Jobs Rhode Island is a new initiative to provide workers with education and workforce training, while also ensuring that employers are able to find workers who are qualified for open positions. Investing in workforce training is a proven, effective strategy for creating economic growth at the local level, and the delivery of these federal funds will help Real Jobs Rhode Island give working men and women the skills and tools they need to find employment and compete in a global economy.

Cleaning Up Brownfields

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Brownfields Program provides local and state governments with resources to clean up land that has been contaminated by pollution and use it for economic development. Each dollar invested in cleaning up a brownfield yields \$18 in economic benefits.

Earlier this year, Congressman Cicilline requested that the EPA provide brownfield funding for Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls. In May, these communities received a total of \$1 million to clean up the I-195 Redevelopment District, contaminated residential areas, and a former manufacturing plant – areas that will now help build stronger, thriving communities in Rhode Island.



Announcing Brownfields funding in Central Falls

Blackstone Valley National Historical Park

In 2014, President Barack Obama signed into law legislation passed in the Senate that Congressman Cicilline introduced in the House to establish the Blackstone Valley National Historical Park. After years of being stuck in committee, Congressman Cicilline successfully moved the House bill through hearings, clearing the way for passage in the House and Senate. This new national park celebrates Rhode Island's pivotal role in the American Industrial Revolution and preserves the area for future generations to enjoy.

During Congressional negotiations over funding for the upcoming fiscal year, Congressman Cicilline consistently advocated for robust resources to support the Blackstone Valley National Historical Park. In December, the House passed, and President Obama signed into law, a bill that provides \$927,000 to fully fund this new national park in 2016.

YouthBuild

YouthBuild Providence provides young Rhode Islanders who have left their public school with an opportunity to earn their GED and develop vocational skills for the construction industry. Since 1997, YouthBuild participants have helped construct affordable housing units in Providence.

Congressman Cicilline pressed U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Tom Perez to support YouthBuild's request for new federal funding to support its work. In September, YouthBuild received \$1.1 million from the Department of Labor – funding that was leveraged with an additional \$576,000 in resources – to provide 64 Rhode Islanders ages 16 to 24 with job training, education, and character-development opportunities over the next two years.

Supporting First Responders

Every day, Rhode Island's first responders put themselves in harm's way in order to serve their communities. Congressman Cicilline has consistently fought to ensure that they have the resources to do their jobs as safely and effectively as possible, which is why he supported the Central Falls Fire Department's request for funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to hire more firefighters and purchase new equipment.

In August, with Congressman Cicilline's support, the Central Falls Fire Department received nearly \$600,000 to hire four additional firefighters and purchase fire hose replacements – improvements that will ensure public safety and help keep our heroic first responders safe from harm.

RIPTA

Each year, the Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority offers nearly 18.5 million rides in 35 cities and towns across our state and provides 785 Rhode Islanders with good-paying jobs. During Congressional negotiations over federal highway funding, Congressman Cicilline successfully urged the removal of language that would have stripped \$12 million in annual funding for RIPTA.

If this amendment had passed, RIPTA would have been forced to reduce public transportation services and put Rhode Islanders out of work. But, as a result of Congressman Cicilline's advocacy, the five-year highway funding bill was signed into law with RIPTA funding intact.

Protecting Funding for Research

Each year, the National Science Foundation's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) provides critical funds to support research and development in states that would otherwise have limited access, including Rhode Island. Since 2001, EPSCoR has provided about \$31.5 million in funding to build partnerships in Rhode Island between state government, industry, and institutions of higher learning in order to enhance research and development and strengthen our research infrastructure.

In June, the House considered an amendment that would have ended EPSCoR and cut off Rhode Island's access to these funds. Along with Republican Congressman Mo Brooks, Congressman Cicilline successfully led a bipartisan effort to defeat this amendment on the House floor and ensured that EPSCoR will continue providing funding in Rhode Island.

Honoring Sister Ann

In 2015, Rhode Island lost one of its most devoted public activists, Sister Ann Keefe. Sister Ann Keefe served for more than 33 years as a member of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in ministry at St. Michael the Archangel Church in South Providence. While there, she helped found more than 22 community organizations, including the Institute for the Study & Practice of Nonviolence, Providence CityArts for Youth, and AIDS Care Ocean State.

In April, the House passed Congressman Cicilline's bill to rename the U.S. Post Office on Elmgrove Avenue in Providence as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office." President Obama signed the bill into law a few weeks later.

This permanent reminder of the life Sister Ann led and the legacy she leaves behind also marks the first time that a U.S. Post Office has been named after a nun.

Leading on Critical Policy Issues

Today, Rhode Island and the United States are facing serious challenges that demand innovative solutions. In 2015, Congressman Cicilline helped lead the fight to support afterschool education, reduce the toll of gun violence, prohibit discrimination against LGBT Americans, promote ethics reforms in Congress, expand access to voting rights, and reduce the power of special interest money in our elections.

Afterschool

According to recent reports, 11.3 American million children are left unsupervised after school between the hours of 3pm and 6pm. In Rhode Island alone, more than 27,000 of school-aged children are responsible for their own care after getting out of school.



At Head Start in Central Falls

As Mayor of Providence, David Cicilline established the Providence After School Alliance (PASA), a nationally-recognized initiative that served more than 1,000 middle school students with hands-on learning opportunities and afterschool activities.

In 2015, Congressman Cicilline introduced a series of national afterschool initiatives in the **Community Partnerships in Education Act (H.R. 1118)** and later successfully lobbied House and Senate conferees to include these initiatives in the **Every Student Succeeds Act (S. 1177)**, which reauthorizes education funding through FY2020 and was recently signed into law by President Obama.

Among the Cicilline proposals included in the Every Student Succeeds Act are:

- Requirements for school districts to engage with community partners and intermediaries when applying for federal grants and implementing state and local education plans.
- New federal grants for states and school districts to support drug and violence prevention, healthy lifestyles, and social development skills.
- Reauthorization of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which provide a dedicated funding stream for after school programming, as well as critical services for low-income students to promote physical and social development, health and nutrition awareness, and academic achievement.

Gun Violence

Throughout his career in public service, Congressman Cicilline has worked to reduce the impact of gun violence on our communities. And as a founding member of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, he understands that Congress must do more to end the prevalence of gun violence that is devastating our communities.

In June, Congressman Cicilline introduced a series of three bills to keep guns out of the hands of children, criminals, and those with a serious mental illness, such that possessing a firearm is dangerous:

- The **End Purchase of Firearms by Dangerous Individuals Act (H.R. 2917)** would require that all 50 states provide information to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System on individuals who are committed to a mental institution or who express a threat of violence to a mental health professional.
- The **Fire Sale Loophole Closing Act (H.R. 2916)** would end the practice by which gun dealers who lose their license can convert their entire inventory to a “personal inventory” in order to liquidate it without conducting background checks on their customers.
- **H. Con. Res. 59** is a concurrent resolution that supports designating June 21 each year as National ASK (Asking Saves Kids) Day. National ASK Day encourages parents to ask other parents if their child will be playing in a house with an unsecured gun.

In December, Congressman Cicilline introduced the **Assault Weapons Ban of 2015** to prohibit the sale, transfer, production, and importation of new military-style weapons and high-capacity magazines.



Introducing the Assault Weapons Ban of 2015

Especially in recent years, assault weapons have become the firearm of choice for mass shooters in the United States, including those at San Bernardino, Aurora, Colorado Springs, and Sandy Hook Elementary School. According to one recent study, more than half of all mass shooters used an assault weapon, a gun with a military-style feature, or a high-capacity magazine.

The sole purpose of an assault weapon is to kill as many people as quickly as possible. It is unconscionable that we continue to allow military-style weapons to be bought and sold while mass shootings are growing more common. The Assault Weapons Ban of 2015 will get weapons that were designed for a battlefield out of our communities.



Introducing the Equality Act

The Equality Act

Today, in most states, it is completely legal for an American citizen to lose their job, get kicked out of their apartment, or be denied a loan just because of who they are or who they love. This is wrong. Fairness and equality are core American values. No American citizen should ever have to live his or her life in fear of discrimination.

In June, Congressman Cicilline introduced **the Equality Act (H.R. 3185)** to prohibit discrimination against LGBT Americans. The Equality Act will expand the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other existing laws to extend anti-discrimination protections for both sexual orientation and gender identity to ensure LGBT Americans are granted the same rights and responsibilities as all other Americans in areas like public accommodations, housing, employment, federal funding, education, credit, and jury service.

The Equality Act has been endorsed by President Barack Obama, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, U.S. Congressman John Lewis, and 167 other House co-sponsors.

Voting Rights

Today, politicians across the country are trying to make it more difficult for young, urban, and minority voters to participate in the democratic process. Congressman Cicilline introduced **the Automatic Voter Registration Act (H.R. 2694)** in June to make it as easy as possible for eligible voters to participate.

The Automatic Voter Registration Act requires that states automatically register anyone who provides information to a motor vehicle registry. The proposal would shift the burden for voter registration from the individual to their state government. It modernizes an outdated system and removes barriers to participation for millions of Americans. In Rhode Island, this bill would mean an additional 249,000 people could have the opportunity to make their voices heard at the ballot box.

Ethics in Congress

In February, Congressman Cicilline and Republican Congressman Scott Rigell introduced **the Ensuring Trust and Honorability in Congressional Standards (ETHICS) Act (H.R.1037)**, a bipartisan proposal to restore public confidence in Congress by requiring all Members of the House of Representatives to undergo annual ethics training.

Currently, members of the Senate, and all Senate and House staffers are required to take on-going ethics training, but members of the House are not required to have any training. The ETHICS Act would require every member of the House to complete ethics training no later than 60 days after entering office and at least once during each subsequent session of Congress.