

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 157

Approved April 5, 2024

WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) announced an unforeseen and immediate closure of the westbound side of the Washington Bridge, significantly disrupting traffic along the I-195 corridor, and

WHEREAS, This closure, initiated for structural concerns, has markedly affected local businesses, particularly in areas such as Wayland Square, Hope Street, and Federal Hill, contributing to reduced customer foot traffic and economic hardship for businesses, and

WHEREAS, Governor Dan McKee, on March 14, revealed plans for the complete demolition and reconstruction of the I-195 Washington Bridge, a project with an anticipated completion in 2026, extending the period of economic impact on local businesses, an

WHEREAS, The U.S. Small Business Administration has acknowledged the economic detriment caused by this infrastructure project, prompting the approval of \$586,200 in Economic Injury Disaster Loans to assist 951 applying businesses across Providence, Bristol, and Kent counties, in addition to businesses in Bristol County, Massachusetts, and Windham County, Connecticut, yet recognizing the need for further support, and

WHEREAS, Heather Singleton, Interim CEO of the Rhode Island Hospitality Association, has underscored the vital role of community support in sustaining small businesses during these challenging times.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of Providence hereby urges Governor Dan McKee and the Rhode Island General Assembly to take immediate and comprehensive action to provide grants or reimbursement assistance to business owners for losses incurred due to the Washington Bridge closure and to actively seek additional funding avenues to provide grants for businesses, particularly those in the most affected areas in Providence such as Wayland Square, Hope Street, and Federal Hill etc.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council calls upon all available resources to be mobilized to support and promote Providence businesses, encouraging both residents and visitors to support the local economy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council urges the exploration of all potential funding sources, including state and federal grants, to provide immediate and long-term financial assistance to businesses facing economic hardship as a direct result of the bridge closure and construction project.


BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That this resolution serves as a testament to the City of Providence's commitment to its business community, recognizing the importance of swift and effective action to mitigate the financial impacts of the Washington Bridge closure, and to foster a vibrant, resilient local economy and that upon its passage a copy of this resolution be sent the Office of Governor Dan McKee, the Office of the Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi, the Office of the Senate President Dominick Ruggerio, and the Office of Mayor Brett Smiley.

IN CITY COUNCIL
APR 04 2024
READ AND PASSED


RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT

CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.


Mayor
Date: 4/5/24