

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 538

Approved October 12, 1976

WHEREAS, a report by a Committee Created to Study the Feasibility of the Establishment of a Law School at Providence College, lead by Presiding Justice, Joseph R. Weisberger of the Superior Court, as Chairman, Reverend Cornelius P. Forster, O.P., Vice-Chairman of Providence College and twelve Members of the Rhode Island Bar, it recommended the establishment of a Law School at Providence College, and

WHEREAS, The Committee's findings, which covered the areas of financing, through funding from Governmental, Foundation and Individual Sources, reported the benefits which would accrue to students within closer proximity to Providence College, rather than some of the number of outstanding Law Schools in the Boston Area and at Yale Law School in Connecticut, and

WHEREAS, the said Committee concluded that applicants from the State of Rhode Island and possibly nearby Massachusetts and Connecticut, could support, with its tuition fees, one Law School with the classes aggregating a total of up to 450 students,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in light of the Committee's report, the City Council does hereby endorse the same incorporated in the subject report, a copy of which is hereto attached, and does, within the scope of its authority, encourage the modification and refurbishing of buildings located on the Chapin Campus, that they may be utilized as a physical plant needed to establish and conduct such a graduate school, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that to Chief Justice Weisberger, Reverend Forster and Messrs. Fanning, E.V. Higgins, J.A. Higgins, Kelleher, McGowan, Monti, Murray, Partridge, Pucci, Travis, J.W. Walsh, and S.R. Walsh, are hereby extended the congratulations of this Body for their comprehension of the need that has existed in the State of Rhode Island for the establishment of an accredited Law School.

IN CITY COUNCIL

OCT 7 1976
READ AND PASSED

Ralph Fanning
ACTING PRES.
Vincent Coscia
CLERK

APPROVED

Vincent Coscia

OCT 12 1976

2/26/76

REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF
ESTABLISHMENT OF A LAW SCHOOL AT PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

The Committee to Study the Feasibility of Establishment of a Law School at Providence College was organized early in 1975 and since that time has had a number of meetings and has derived information from a great many sources, including deans of law schools, law librarians, law professors and reports of other similar committees organized by other educational institutions within and without the State of Rhode Island.

The researches of the Committee indicate that law school enrollment is likely to remain at a relatively high rate during the next ten years. These estimates are based on factors which are subject to change as all human behavioral reactions are subject to change. However, these estimates are based upon the best information obtainable.

From 1971 to 1974, 376,984 students across the country participated in the LSAT examinations. Of this number 1920 listed Rhode Island as their state of residence. This may

be an indication of the numbers of Rhode Island residents who are interested in a legal education or slightly more than 600 applicants per year.

Although Rhode Island is located within reasonable proximity of the Boston area where a number of outstanding law schools are situated, Rhode Island residents find difficulty in obtaining admission to these law schools. For example, in recent years Harvard has generally accepted 4 Rhode Islanders each year, and out of 112 Rhode Island residents who applied for Boston University in 1974, 24 were accepted. As further examples, 2 Rhode Island residents were accepted each year in 1973 and 1974 by Northeastern University School of Law, and approximately one per year at Yale Law School. By far the largest number of Rhode Islanders have enrolled at Suffolk where in 1973, 214 Rhode Island residents made application and of these, 64 were accepted and 43 were actually enrolled.

From these, together with a number of other figures showing the rate of acceptance of Rhode Island residents at other New England law schools, the Committee has concluded that Rhode Island applications plus those which would probably be derived from nearby Massachusetts and Connecticut could support one law school with three classes aggregating a total of from 350 to 450 students.

It is further the opinion of this Committee that a law school of such size, after certain start-up expenses were defrayed, would be fully self-supporting. It is the recommendation of this Committee and has been the consistent charge of Father Peterson in outlining the problems for the Committee that any contemplated law school must stand on a completely independent financial footing and that it should not in any way divert or dilute resources from the regular academic programs now in existence at Providence College.

It is the belief of the Committee that the following capital and start-up expenses should be defrayed by a fundraising program to be completed before the law school should come into existence.

- (A) Library of 60,000 volumes with necessary equipment ...\$ 500,000.
- (B) Modification and refurbishing of buildings on the Chapin Campus\$ 500,000.
- (C) Furnishings and Equipment for classrooms and offices\$ 300,000.
- (D) Salaries and operating expenses for the first four years unfunded by tuition\$1,700,000.
- (E) Total start-up expenses to be raised\$3,000,000.

In explanation of the above figures, a few explanatory notes would be appropriate.

The American Bar Association Standards and Rules of Procedure require that the law school shall maintain and administer a library adequate for its program. This law library must be administered by a full time librarian whose principal activities are the development and maintenance of the library. Such librarian is required to have a competent and adequate staff. It is further required that the law school shall have an adequate physical plant with sufficient classrooms and seminar rooms to permit reasonable scheduling of all courses. There must be a private office for each full time member of the faculty. Space for study purposes must be provided in the law library or in an adjacent law school facility sufficient to accommodate a substantial percentage of its total enrollment.

The law school shall have no fewer than six full time faculty members, in addition to a full time dean and law librarian. The present going rate of salary for a dean would range between \$30,000. and \$45,000. annually. The salary range for full time faculty members at the beginning would approximate \$25,000. to \$35,000. The salary of a librarian would range from \$20,000. to \$25,000. To all of these salaries approximately 12½% should be added for fringe benefits.

As enrollment at the law school increased, additions would be made to the full time faculty and probably a number of part-time faculty members should be recruited from the Rhode Island bench and bar. It would be necessary to have the dean and the librarian retained at a very early stage in the school's development so that they might guide the President in the formation of early decisions which would affect the future course to be adopted by the school.

It is anticipated that the school might charge an annual tuition of approximately \$2,000. Such tuition would be within the moderate range of those being presently charged by existing schools. The average tuition cost of a cross-section of law schools throughout the nation was \$1,195.00 during the academic year 1973-1974. It is safe to assume that this average would have increased significantly by the time a school established at Providence College would come into operation. In any event, using the approximate figure of \$2,000., it is the opinion of the Committee that the law school would become fully self-supporting at the point where 350 students were enrolled at an annual tuition of \$2,000. each. This would generate a total income of \$700,000. annually. The Committee assumes that it would take approximately

four years to reach this goal. During this period of time, capital expenses and salaries would have to be funded from the initial monies raised, although in the latter portion of the four years some expenses would be offset by income.

It is the opinion and recommendation of the Committee that the establishment of a law school at Providence College would be feasible, that it would become self-supporting and that it would not divert or dilute the resources available for the conduct of its liberal arts academic program. This recommendation is based upon the ability of the College to raise, from sources not identical with those which presently support the liberal arts programs, a total sum of \$3,000,000. to defray the capital and start-up expenses outlined above. If this could be achieved, the Committee is confident that the establishing of a law school would be a practical goal, susceptible of achievement and maintenance on a self-supporting basis.

Such a law school would provide an opportunity for many Rhode Island residents, not now able to achieve a legal education, to attend law school on a basis which they could afford. Many Rhode Island residents who are qualified

law students are now unable to find places in a New England law school, and may be prohibited by factors of expense from attending law schools outside the New England area.

A Rhode Island law school could and should serve as a center for continuing legal education for the Rhode Island Bar, and for research and development in the improvement and refinement of both substantive and procedural aspects of the Rhode Island legal system. A law school would serve as a significant community resource in terms of its educational system. A law school would also enhance and enrich the totality of educational programs offered at Providence College.

Ultimately, evening courses might be offered at the law school to provide yet another opportunity for Rhode Island residents to achieve a complete legal education or a limited study of the law in selected areas appropriate to their particular professional interest.

For the foregoing reasons, the Committee recommends to the President that steps be taken to explore the raising of funds from governmental, foundation and individual sources in order to achieve the accumulation of \$3,000,000.00 as a basic law school capital fund. If this initial task can be accomplished, the Committee recommends that steps be taken to create and organize

a law school at Providence College to be located on the Chapin Campus, utilizing certain buildings which have been viewed by the Committee and which are believed to be adequate in the event that modification and refurbishing is effectuated at the cost figures outlined earlier in this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Cornelius P. Forster, O.P.

Vice Chairman

Stephen A. Fanning, Jr.

Eugene V. Higgins

James A. Higgins

Thomas F. Kelleher

Leo P. McGowan

Michael A. Monti

Paul F. Murray

John J. Partridge

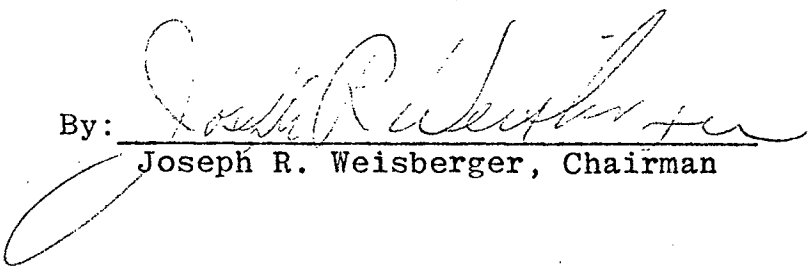
Thomas D. Pucci

Theodore W. Travis

Joseph W. Walsh

Stephen R. Walsh

By:


Joseph R. Weisberger, Chairman

October 13, 1976

Reverend Thomas R. Peterson
President of Providence College
River Avenue
Providence, RI 02918

My Dear Reverend:

I submit the enclosure being a certified copy of Resolution of the City Council No. 538, Approved October 12, 1976, endorsing the report of the Committee Created to Study the feasibility of the establishment of a Law School at Providence College, the same is headed by Presiding Justice, Joseph R. Weisberger of the Superior Court.

The subject Resolution was sponsored before the City Council by Councilman Robert F. Lynch, an Alumnus at Providence College, and Councilman Louis R. Stravato.

Please accept my personal endorsement of the concept, which in my opinion, is most needed in the area.

Very sincerely yours,

Vincent Vespia
City Clerk of Providence

VV:hgg
Enc.

October 13, 1976

Honorable Joseph R. Weisberger
Presiding Justice
Superior Court
State of Rhode Island
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903

My Dear Judge Weisberger:

I submit the enclosure being a certified copy of Resolution of the City Council No. 538, Approved October 12, 1976, endorsing the recommendation of the Committee, which you headed, to study the feasibility of the establishment of a Law School at Providence College.

The subject Resolution was sponsored before the City Council by Councilman Robert F. Lynch, an Alumnus, at Providence College, and Councilman Louis R. Stravato.

Please accept my personal endorsement of the concept, which in my opinion, is most needed in that area.

Very sincerely yours, —

Vincent Vespia
City Clerk of Providence

VV:hgg
Enc.

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02918

Office of the President

October 26, 1976

Mr. Vincent Vespia
City Clerk of Providence
City Hall
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Mr. Vespia:

I am very grateful to you and to the other members of the City Council for Resolution No. 538, which was passed in support of the establishment of a law school at Providence College.

The public recognition of the excellent work done by Judge Weisberger and Father Forster and their Committee is most encouraging.

Thank you very much for showing your concern.

With every best wish, I remain

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Thomas R. Peterson" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas R. Peterson, O.P.
President

TRP/cr