State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
State House, Room 224
Providence, Rhode Island 02903
401-222-2080

Lincoln D. Chafee
Governor

June 12, 2012

TO THE HONORABLE, THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 14, Article IX of the Constitution of the State of Rhode Island and Section 43-1-4 of the Rhode Island General Laws, I transmit, with my disapproval, 2012-H 7936, "An Act Relating to the City of Warwick – Sewer Authority."

State law requires Rhode Island property owners to connect to available sewers by January 1, 2014. This bill further exempts Warwick property owners from this mandate, allowing them to delay sewer connection until one year following the sale or transfer of the property, a delay that will undermine the Cesspool PhaseOut Act of 2007 and prolong the elimination of antiquated cesspools for decades.

I oppose this bill for several reasons. First, the voters of Warwick overwhelming approved a bond issue to finance and extend sewer lines in the City. The Warwick Sewer Authority has invested upwards of $100 million in new sewer construction. The financial health and solvency of the Authority relies on a projected customer base that includes all Warwick property owners. This legislation would erode the Authority's projected customer base and force the Warwick Sewer Authority to increase rates charged to existing sewer customers.

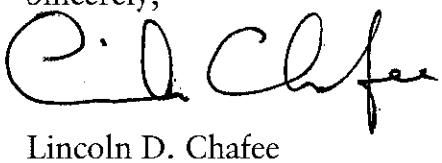
Second, cesspools within two hundred feet (200') of public drinking water wells, the inland edge of a shoreline feature bordering a tidal water area, or a surface drinking water supply, scheduled to be abandoned by January 1, 2014 by the Cesspool PhaseOut Act of 2007, will continue to threaten public health.

Finally, the state has made great progress in improving the environment and water quality in the Narragansett and Greenwich Bays by requiring tie-ins to sewer and wastewater treatment systems. Significant statewide investments have been made to improve the ecosystem and support local economies that rely on clean and healthy

bays. This bill runs contrary to improving water quality, encouraging marine industries, and the promotion of public health.

For these reasons, I disapprove of this legislation and respectfully urge your support of this veto.

Sincerely,



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