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Revenue for Rhode Islanders Coalition and More than 50 Organizations and Businesses Urge Legislative Leaders to Include Revenue from the Wealthy in Final State Budget

PROVIDENCE, RI -- As Rhode Island prepares for the release of the FY2027 state budget tomorrow, the Revenue for Rhode Islanders Coalition and more than 50 statewide organizations and businesses (list below) are calling on legislative leaders to meet this moment with courage and urgency by including meaningful revenue solutions — including the top one percent surtax proposal — in the final budget.

Affordability was the dominant conversation at last week's People's Agenda Tax Policy Summit and Gubernatorial Candidate Meet and Greet. Not being able to pay for groceries. Going without utilities because they are too expensive. Staying home because gas prices are too high. Can't buy a home or afford today's rent - even for a small studio in a less desirable neighborhood. Likely to lose Medicaid because there is zero money to pay for it. A daughter even shared her mother couldn't baby formula but couldn't breast-feed either because of work.

"Rhode Islanders are being told to brace for devastating federal cuts while the wealthiest continue receiving massive tax breaks and asking lawmakers to 'pause' on fairness," said Weayonnoh Nelson-Davies, executive director of the Economic Progress Institute. "Working families cannot afford another delay. The top one percent surtax is about protecting our state, investing in our future, and finally asking those who have benefited the most to contribute more. Rhode Islanders are ready. Now lawmakers must decide who they are fighting for. It is my hope that they are fighting for the people of Rhode Island."

Rhode Island families everywhere are struggling with rising housing costs, food insecurity, healthcare affordability, and transportation instability. At the same time, devastating federal cuts under H.R. 1 threaten Medicaid, SNAP, and other essential programs that thousands of Rhode Islanders rely upon every day.

Working families cannot continue carrying the burden while the wealthiest Rhode Islanders receive massive federal tax breaks and are asked to contribute nothing more to help stabilize our state.

The proposed top one percent surtax would raise approximately \$203 million annually by applying a surtax only to taxable income above \$640,000 per year. These revenues could help Rhode Island protect critical services and invest in healthcare, childcare, public transportation, education, and economic opportunity.

Opponents continue to recycle disproven claims that asking the wealthiest to contribute more will harm the economy. We have seen these same arguments fail in Massachusetts, where the millionaire's tax has generated billions more than projected for investments in education and transportation.

Rhode Islanders understand what is at stake. Poll after poll shows strong public support for requiring the wealthiest residents to pay more to protect our state's future.

This budget is about values and priorities. We urge House and Senate leadership to reject austerity, reject fearmongering, and choose a path that protects Rhode Island families during a period of growing economic uncertainty.

The Revenue for Rhode Islanders Coalition will continue mobilizing residents across the state to demand a budget that reflects fairness, shared responsibility, and investment in our communities.

A rally at the State House is being held today at 3PM to show the urgent need for revenue from the wealthy. The time is now for everyone to pay their fair share. Rhode Islanders and the present and future of our state's economy depends on it.

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Organizations and coalitions that support the proposal to Tax the Top One Percent:

ACLU of RI

AFL-CIO of Rhode Island

A.H.B. Enterprises LLC

Alliance of RI Southeast Asians (ARISE)

Alliance to Mobilize Our Resistance (AMOR)

Black Lives Matter RI PAC

Carpenters Local 330

Center for Youth & Community Leadership in Education (CYCLE)

Coalition of Labor Union Women RI

Commission for Health Advocacy and Equity CHAE

Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE)

Economic Progress Institute

Harrison Law Associates

Housing Network of Rhode Island

IFTPE Local 400

Immigrant Coalition of Rhode Island

Inner Wingspan LLC

Latino Policy Institute

Like No Udder

National Education Association Rhode Island (NEARI)

Planned Parenthood Votes! of RI

Parents Leading for Educational Equity (PLEE)

Progreso Latino

Protect Our Healthcare Coalition

Providence Central Labor Council

Rhody Craft

RI Association for Infant Mental Health

RI Black Business Association (RIBBA)

RI Center for Justice
RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence
RI Coalition for Children and Families
RI Coalition for the Homeless
RI Council of Churches
RI Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals (HPRIFT)
Right from the Start Coalition
RI Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty
RI Kids Count
RI National Organization for Women
RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)
RI Working Families Power
Save RIPTA Coalition
SEIU 1199NE
SEIU Local 580
SEIU State Council
Senior Agenda Coalition of RI
Sista Fire
UNITE HERE Local 26
URI American Association of University Professors (AAUP)
Women's Fund of RI
Workforce Alliance

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About the Economic Progress Institute:

The Economic Progress Institute envisions and fights for a Rhode Island where public investments put people first. We work toward a state where everyone has healthcare when they're sick, a safe and affordable place to live, childcare that doesn't break the bank, nutritious food to eat, and access to opportunity — regardless of race, gender, disability, age, or zip code. Learn more at www.economicprogressri.org.

