

# VICTORIA GU

## State Senate — District 38 —

### July Newsletter: Town Hall Recap & Westerly Rail Action Alert



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As Gloria Steinem said, “Democracy is just something you must do every day, like brushing your teeth.”

A huge thank you to everyone who joined our town hall on July 7th!

Your presence, questions, and feedback made it more than just an update—it was a powerful reminder of what community-driven democracy looks like. We covered the state budget, recent legislative wins (and challenges), and most importantly, we listened to your feedback.

We used Slido.com to let people submit their questions, upvote other people's questions, and answer survey questions. The slides and summaries of bills that the RI legislature passed in 2025 can be found at <https://victoria4ri.com/2025-session-review-town-hall/>

[View Slides & Poll Results](#)



**THANKS FOR YOUR  
IDEAS & CONCERNS!**

Slides & Recap of July 7<sup>th</sup> town hall can be found  
at [victoria4ri.com/town-hall](https://victoria4ri.com/town-hall)

401-388-0696 **Contact Us** [victoria4ri.com/contact](https://victoria4ri.com/contact)

**Action Alert: Make Your Voice Heard for  
Upgrading Westerly Station**



Westerly Station has been really busy this summer, with dozens of people getting on, some struggling with suitcases and narrow stairs. I tried bringing my bike on board, and it was a little difficult with stairs! That's why upgrading the station with high-level platforms is a no-brainer for Westerly. It helps people get on and off the train safely and is a big win for accessibility.

The RI Division of Statewide Planning has opened the public comment period for its [2026-2035 State Transportation Improvement Program](#). **The deadline to comment is July 30th at 4pm**

**Please send in a comment (using the button below) expressing your support for the Westerly Platform project.** It could be as simple as saying "I support the Westerly Platform project and would like to see these upgrades as soon as possible". The draft plan already calls for the construction of high-level platforms at Westerly Station, which is a prerequisite to extending Shore Line East to Westerly (Connecticut's commuter rail currently runs from NYC to New London). The more enthusiasm that Rhode Island sees for the project, both from RI and CT residents, the more likely it is to make it a priority. The sooner the platforms are upgraded, the sooner we can extend Shore Line East to Rhode Island!

Send in your comment in support!

# **Charlestown Breachway Update:**

## **Thursday Aug 7th 6pm**

### **at Kettle Pond Visitor Center**

Charlestown Breachway Update: Summer Conditions, Repairs, and Future Plans

Join us for an informative public session on the current state of the Charlestown Breachway. Learn how the Breachway is performing this summer, hear updates on recent repair efforts, and discover what's planned for future improvements and fundraising initiatives.

Featured Speakers:


Steve McCandless, GIS Coordinator & Coastal Geologist, Town of Charlestown

Emily Hall, Coastal Geologist, RI Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC)

Alicia Schaffner, Executive Director, Salt Ponds Coalition

This event is proudly presented in partnership with the Town of Charlestown, Salt Ponds Coalition, URI Coastal Resources Center, Rhode Island Sea Grant, RI Coastal Resources Management Council, RI Infrastructure Bank, University of Rhode Island, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

 Date: Thursday, August 7

 Time: 6:00 PM

 Location: Kettle Pond Visitor Center

50 Bend Road, Charlestown, RI 02813

To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/charlestown-breachway-status-update-tickets-1402947055409>

## **Housing Champions Bill Signed Into Law**





**SIGNED INTO  
LAW!**

MY BILL TO CREATE A  
HOUSING CHAMPIONS  
PROGRAM WAS SIGNED  
INTO LAW:

- REWARDS  
COMMUNITIES THAT  
ADOPT PRO-HOUSING  
POLICIES, INCLUDING:
- INVESTING IN  
WATER/SEWER &
- WALKABLE/BIKEABLE  
NEIGHBORHOODS

 GET MONTHLY UPDATES AT  
[VICTORIA4RI.COM/NEWSLETTER](https://victoria4ri.com/newsletter)

**VICTORIA  
GU**  
State Senate  
— District 38 —

The Governor signed my Housing Champions bill into law! For the longest time our state housing policy has been missing an incentive for cities and towns to proactively adopt policies that support and encourage the production of housing.

This bill provides that incentive through a program that is modeled after successful ones in Massachusetts and other states. Addressing our housing crisis is a team effort, and this program would encourage a collaborative and productive approach to addressing Rhode Island's housing needs.

Thanks to Rep June Speakman and many others for partnering on this effort.

## **Monthly Westerly Station / Commuter Rail Working Group Meetings**

**Next meeting scheduled for: Monday August 25th, 9:30am at Westerly Library 2nd Floor**

Thank you to everyone who has sent letters so far! For those who haven't, use this form to send a letter to Gov McKee and your Congress Member (you can also customize the letter): <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/asking-congressmembers-to-support-westerly-station-upgrade-for-commuter-rail>

## Supporting the Frank Olean Center

Proud to support the **Frank Olean Center** and its mission to help individuals with developmental disabilities live full, meaningful lives as part of their community. This legislative grant helps keep their vans safe and reliable—so the people they serve can keep moving forward every day. 💙🚐



## Supporting the Charlestown Memorial Day Committee

Proud to support the **Charlestown Memorial Day Committee** and its mission to honor our veterans, remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice, and unite the community in tribute. This legislative grant will support the annual Memorial Day parade that brings our community together in remembrance and gratitude

## Supporting the Ocean Community

# Chamber of Commerce

Glad to give another **legislative grant** award to the **Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce**—empowering our local small businesses, entrepreneurs, and families across Westerly and South County



## Ready to Level Up Your Career?

The Rhode Island Department of Labor & Training offers **free or low-cost training and apprenticeship programs** designed to help you build the skills employers need, in sectors like the building trades, manufacturing, teaching, entrepreneurship, and more. Whether you're just starting out or ready to advance, there's a path for you.

- ✓ **Online & In-Person Training Options**
- ✓ **Apprenticeship Programs** for hands-on learning
- ✓ **Real Jobs Rhode Island** connects you to high-demand industries with training in technical skills, career readiness, and more.

Learn more and search through their programs here <https://dlt.ri.gov/free-or-reduced-cost-training-programs>

[View email in browser](#)

Friends of Victoria Gu · PO Box 116 · Charlestown RI 02813-0116 · Charlestown, RI 028130116 · USA