



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
Executive Office of Commerce 317 Iron  
Horse Way, Suite 203 Providence,  
Rhode Island 02908

August 24, 2023

Alejandra Y. Castillo  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce  
U.S. Economic Development Administration  
1401 Constitution Ave, NW, Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Letter of Support: City of East Providence Incubator Space Feasibility Analysis

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo,

Rhode Island Commerce supports the application of the City of East Providence to the Economic Development Administration to fund a feasibility analysis for an incubator space in East Providence. The State is committed to improving the economic opportunities and outcomes in our distressed communities—a commitment we share with the City of East Providence.

This project would allow the city to analyze the regional market demand for specialized food services that further build upon and enhance the existing food production ecosystem in Rhode Island as well as enhance arts-based business incubation and ocean-based economy businesses in East Providence and the surrounding region. Each of these are targeted clusters for the State.

Additionally, we see this work as additive to a few upcoming and ongoing efforts we have—including a second-stage food production feasibility study that we have requested funding for through the EDA and our growing Ocean Tech Hub work, which prioritizes access to jobs in the undersea robotics, automation, and advanced materials industries. The Ocean Tech Hub is also a program that Commerce is seeking funding to support through the EDA.

This effort also aligns to two ongoing strategic planning efforts that the state is undertaking: the ongoing Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), due to EDA in October 2023, and an updated Statewide Food Strategy (internally now called Relish Rhody 2.0) that will be developed over the next fourteen months.

Please reach out to my chief strategy officer, Daniela Fairchild ([daniela.fairchild@commerceri.com](mailto:daniela.fairchild@commerceri.com)) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth M. Tanner".

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Elizabeth M. Tanner, Esq.  
Secretary of Commerce