



PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT INFO. :

Office of the Mayor
Matthew Paddock
Communications Manager
(401) 435-7500 Ext 11013
(C) (401) 612-7511

East Providence Scores Decisive R.I. Supreme Court Win in Tax Ruling

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld a lower court decision holding that PACE Organization of Rhode Island is not exempt from paying personal and real estate taxes on property it owns in the City’s industrial park at 10 Tripps Lane.

In August of 2022, PACE Organization of Rhode Island applied for a tax exemption which was denied by the City tax assessor Sarah Frew on November 18, 2022. In her denial, Frew noted that PACE’s reliance on a state statutory exemption, RIGL 44-3-3(a)(12), was not applicable to their operations because they were neither a library or society organized for the support of the aged poor. PACE argued because they primarily serve elderly Medicaid patrons, they qualified for the exemption under the statute’s plain reading.

“My administration carefully examines all applications for tax exemption with the assistance of the city solicitor’s office to ensure that only qualified entities receive an exemption to protect our taxpaying residents from shouldering any extra tax burden from lost revenue from exempt properties” Mayor Bob DaSilva said.

“While PACE is a great institution in our community which we helped relocate here through a zone change, my job as Mayor is to look out for the best interests of all our taxpayers to ensure that everyone is paying their fair share. By litigating this claim all the way to our state’s highest court by my Solicitor Michael J. Marcello, we have ensured that PACE, and other institutions like it in our City, will continue to pay taxes which help support services like police, fire, and EMS that they use,” DaSilva added.

The Rhode Island Supreme Court's ruling ends PACE's quest to seek a refund of the property and personal taxes that it had paid the City which with interest totals \$1.2 million. The decision ensures that the City will continue to collect tax revenue on the subject property in the future.

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