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**TESTIMONY ON PROPOSED CRMC AMENDMENTS TO “MANAGEMENT  
PROCEDURES” REGULATIONS  
[650-RICR-10-00-1]  
May 11, 2021**

The ACLU of Rhode Island appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments to 650-RICR-10-00-1, concerning the CRMC’s management procedures, and specifically the amendment’s proposal to eliminate the \$1,000 filing fee that currently exists for an individual or entity to propose a change to the Council’s regulations or seek a declaratory ruling under the Administrative Procedures Act. We write to express our support for these amendments.

Our organization was surprised, to put it mildly, to learn that this filing fee existed. The ACLU has been involved in the rulemaking activities of numerous state agencies over the years, and we had never come across any department of state government obliging petitioners to pay a fee for making use of the APA process.

Indeed, there is clearly no authority in the APA for an agency to enforce such a fee. We additionally believe that significant constitutional issues are implicated in imposing a fee on a person seeking to exercise their First Amendment right to petition the government for a redress of grievances under the APA.

We therefore strongly support these proposed amendments to the agency’s rules so as to eliminate this problematic financial charge. Thank you for considering our views.

Submitted by: Steven Brown, Executive Director