



**MATTHEW R. REILLY**  
Cranston City Council

October 11, 2022

The Honorable Daniel McKee  
Governor  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Pallet Houses – Pastore Complex

Dear Governor McKee:

I am a member of the Cranston City Council representing Ward 6 which includes the neighborhoods surrounding the ever-growing Pastore Government Center Complex including Garden City, Garden Hills, Glen Hills, Oak Hill, Mayfield, and Dean Estates.

As the Councilman for the area, Mayor Kenneth Hopkins has advised me that your administration is considering constructing a village of so-called “pallet” houses for the homeless at the Pastore Center as part of your plan to address Rhode Island’s homeless and housing challenges.

While I acknowledge and support efforts to provide a continuum of social services to the homeless population of our state, the City of Cranston, and Ward 6 specifically, can longer be the go-to location to solve all of the State’s needs. We simply cannot bear any more of the State’s burden logistically, financially, or socially. Currently, the City of Cranston hosts more state facilities and programs than any other municipality in the State of Rhode Island, with the exception of Providence. There are many other municipalities in the State of Rhode Island that are equally equipped to assist the State with this program. The needs and burdens of the State must be shared equitably throughout the State, not just jammed into Ward 6 in Cranston.

We will no longer sit quietly while the State intensifies its use of the Pastore Center to the detriment of the residents of Ward 6, while at the same time drastically reducing the much-needed funding to the City of Cranston.

Currently, the Pastore Center is already home to the largest men’s shelter in the state, Harrington Hall. The addition of your proposed “homeless village” would significantly increase the amount of registered sex offenders and homeless to an area that is already dangerously saturated. The residents of Ward 6 in Cranston live with the consequences of the State’s decision every day. Every morning droves of registered sex offenders spill out onto the streets of Ward 6 with nowhere to go until the shelter reopens in the evening. Some panhandle. Others enter the woods. Many patronize the local liquor stores and congregate at the covered bus stops. While others frequent the library. Recently, one such resident of Harrington Hall was arrested in the middle of the

Cranston Public Library as he was found exposed and masturbating at the computer for all to see. To increase this population in this area inequitably endangers my constituents, while communities such as Cumberland, for example, remain safe and sound.

For too many years, the City of Cranston has been taken advantage of financially by the State as it continues to flood more and more state facilities and services into the Pastore Complex while reducing funding to the City. The State of Rhode Island utilizes over 364 acres of prime real estate in the City of Cranston, and pays pennies on the dollar compared to what the City would receive if this land was thoughtfully developed. Not to mention the extensive public safety resources of fire and police needed to respond to the various facilities and buildings at the Pastore Center that drain the city financially.

Cranston is already overburdened being the home to more of the state's problems and institutional facilities than any other city or town. We cannot bear anymore. I urge you to explore alternatives for this plan in one of the other municipalities in the State.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Matthew R. Reilly  
Councilman  
Ward 6