



The RISC mission is to address quality of life issues affecting Rhode Island residents such as sound government, ethics and conflicts of interest, taxation and fiscal accountability, planning and development, land use, the environment, voting rights, education and Rhode Island related matters.

Rhode Island Statewide Coalition • 3949 Old Post Rd., P.O. Box 567, Charlestown, RI 02813 • 401-213-6316 • www.risc-ri.org

## Record Attendance at Winter Meeting!

RISC's 6th Annual Winter Meeting hosted an unprecedented 258 attendees at the Newport Hyatt Regency on March 21. Members and guests from all over the state came to hear the Governor, State Treasurer, and Director of the East Providence Taxpayers Association address the financial challenges facing the state. Questions were fielded following the presentations. In addition, **over 26 legislators attended, several of whom have joined RISC!**

**Gary Sasse, Director of Administration and former Director of Revenue,** set the stage for the speakers with an explanation of the State's financial condition.



Winter Meeting Attendees

**EPTA Director, Bill Murphy,** described

the ongoing dispute between the East Providence School Committee and the local NEA over the union's excessive contract demands. He stressed that his situation exists all over the state and that citizens must get involved, take action, attend

meetings, write letters, and sign petitions. The courts have referred the issue to the Labor Relations Board which has since decided not to meet until August!



Gov. Carcieri & State Treasurer Caprio with others at the RISC Winter Meeting

**State Treasurer Frank Caprio** tackled

the state's 7 billion dollar unfunded pension liability that will continue to worsen in the coming years. The system needs a complete overhaul, and the unions must make concessions.

**Governor Donald Carcieri** concluded the program with his deep concerns over the upcoming budget and the flight of businesses and individuals to other states. He emphasized the absolute necessity for the voters to get involved and elect honest, capable legislators who will serve the citizens rather than special interests. As Chairman Harry Staley noted afterwards in his closing remarks, "The Governor proposes the budget, but the Legislature disposes!"

## The Casino Battle Is Not Over!

The U.S. Congress is considering legislation that could overturn the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling, **Carcieri v. Salazar**. In its February, 2009, decision, the Court decided that the U.S. Dept. of Interior could not take land in Charlestown into trust for the Narragansett Indian tribe. If taken into trust, this land would be exempt from R.I. and local land use and environmental regulations. Also, the statewide vote against a R.I. casino would have no effect. The Narragansetts and their casino backers have made no secret that they would construct a casino if they could.

Please contact your Senators and Representatives in your

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state and let them know that you are concerned about the potential for a casino in Charlestown. The Supreme Court does NOT have the last word on this matter. We must prevail in the U.S. Congress or there will be nothing to stop a casino here or elsewhere. In Rhode Island, contact:

Sen. Reed: 401-528-5200 or 202-224-4642. Web: <http://reed.senate.gov/contact/contact-share.cfm>

Sen. Whitehouse: 401-453-5200 or 202-224-2921. Web: <http://whitehouse.senate.gov/contact>

Rep. Langevin: 401-732-9400 or 202-225-2735. Web: <http://langevin.house.gov/comments.shtml>

Rep. Kennedy: 401-729-5600 or 202-225-4911. Web: <http://forms.house.gov/formpatrickkennedy/IMA/contact.htm>

Both in-state and out-of-state taxpayers, should contact their U.S. Congress Representatives and Senators.

## RISC Affiliates Make a Difference

**Affiliates: Little Compton Taxpayers Assoc.; Lincoln Taxpayers Assoc.; Concerned Island Taxpayers Assoc.; Portsmouth Concerned Citizens; East Providence Taxpayers Assoc.; Narragansett Community Connection; North Kingstown Taxpayers Org.; Tiverton Concerned Citizens; RI Mobile Sportsfishermen; Washington County Consolidation Group.**

Thanks to the efforts of these groups, Rhode Islanders are slowly but surely receiving more and better representation in their local governments. Many members have been elected to Town Councils and School Committees and appointed to Planning and Zoning Boards, Charter Revision Committees, and even Budget Committees. They are pressing for tax caps, financial impact statements, transparency in labor contracts, limits on spending, consolidation of services, and statewide pension and healthcare plans. Win or lose, they monitor meetings and expose to the public many facts and actions that have been hidden. A common thread in all these affiliates is their determination to bring common sense, transparency, and vision to the process of Town government. As Westerly Town Councilor Dick Anthony says, “We are not just talking; we are walking, and we are making a difference!”

## Get Rid of the Straight Party Lever By Beverly Clay, OCG Legislative Chair

The Straight Party voting system is not suited to the optical-scan machines now used in local and state elections. Since there is no visual confirmation, it deprives you of voting for specific individuals and stacks the votes along party lines. With the old mechanical voting machines, even with the straight party vote, you would see an X next to every candidate for whom you voted, and you could change the vote by lifting the lever. The current optical-scan machines only allow you to connect an arrow to the party of your choice, and you cannot see your registered vote. They do not let you realize that you can change your vote in individual races, and they do not tell you how to do that. Furthermore, if you vote for one person in a group of candidates, one who is not in your choice of party, the machine will “throw out” **all** of your “straight party” choices in that race. This happens in any partisan local race where there is more than one position open.. Additionally, if there are non-partisan races in your city or town, you have not voted for any candidate in those races. All this happens in any partisan local race where there is more than one position open.

**Contact your Senator and/or Representative and urge them to support the bills introduced by Rep. Brian Newberry (2009-H-5318) and Sen. David Bates (2009-S-0080) to eliminate the straight party lever.** The bills have been held “for further study” which is a way of killing them. Contact your senator and/or representative now to force a vote in the Assembly. For addresses and telephone. numbers, go to [www.statewidecoalition.com](http://www.statewidecoalition.com).

**Join RISC online at [www.statewidecoalition.com](http://www.statewidecoalition.com)**

## Join the Rhode Island Revolt!

RISC has embarked on a campaign to galvanize the taxpaying public to come together in large numbers, make themselves heard on Smith Hill during this time of fiscal crises, and take back their government. To this end, RISC is participating in the **April 15 Tea Party at the State House**. **Jim Beale, RISC President, is one of the featured speakers.**



RISC President  
James T. Beale, Jr.

## RISC's 2009 Legislative Goals

- **Require all cities and towns to make records electronically available at cost.**
- **Require that financial impact statements be appended to every State contract and be posted on the State website at least one business day before signing.**
- **Repeal or amend the Caroulo Act that now allows towns to exceed their tax caps.**
- **Require all school employees to join a statewide pension and healthcare plan.**
- **Limit collective bargaining to wages and benefits only.**

## RISC on Radio and TV



RISC Chairman Harry Staley

In response to RISC's many pro-active activities, including frequent appearances to testify at legislative hearings, and in recognition of the powerful influence of the RISC-y Business e-newsletter and the RISC Foundation's website, **themoneytrail.org**, there have been many requests for interviews on the talk shows and television. In March alone, **Harry Staley** and **Jim Beale** were interviewed by **Dan Yorke** on his program, *Compelling Talk*; **Harriet Lloyd** and **Harry Staley** participated in the *State of the State* television program with **Larry Valencia of OCG**; and on separate occasions, Jim and Harry discussed state issues on the *Helen Glover Show*. RISC is also referred to frequently in the press, and the *Providence Business News* published a 5-question interview with **Harriet Lloyd** about the philosophy behind the RISC e-newsletter and the political power of the Internet.

## Resurrect the Voter I.D. Bill

**Rep. Lally has almost killed the Voter I.D. bill, H5097, which "would provide that any person claiming to be a registered and eligible voter who desires to vote at a primary election, special election or general election, shall provide proof of identity."** The House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Donald J. Lally, held the bill for "further study", a euphemism for killing it. Note that this bill even provided for **FREE I.D.** cards to homeless voters and those who cannot afford the fees. **WITHOUT IMMEDIATE CITIZEN ACTION DEMANDING A VOTE ON THE BILL, it will NOT reach the floor of the Assembly.**

RISC has issued the following policy statement: Comprehensive measures to ensure the integrity of our electoral system are fundamental to maintaining confidence in our entire system of democracy. Such measures must include verification of eligibility at the time of registration, and verification of identity at the time of voting. This is just common sense; otherwise, we find ourselves in a Chicago-like atmosphere of dead people miraculously resurrected on election days, and who "vote early and often." So, it is inexcusable that the House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Rep. Lally (District 33 N. Kingstown, Narragansett, S. Kingstown) has killed a bill seeking to exercise that most sacred of citizen duties.

Save the Date!  
RISC Annual Meeting  
August 1, 2009

3949 Old Post Rd., P.O. Box 567  
Charlestown, RI 02813



**RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE COALITION (RISC)  
MEMBERSHIP FORM**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I AM A VOTER IN THE STATE OF  Rhode Island  The State of \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (check one) Term of Membership is annual (according to enrollment date)

***The First State Society***

- Directors Circle \$10,000 +
- Chairman's Circle \$7,500 - \$9,999
- President's Circle \$5,000 - \$7,499
- Leadership Circle \$2,500 - \$4,999

***The Founders Club***

- Platinum \$1,000 - \$2,499
- Gold \$750 - \$999
- Silver \$500 - \$749
- Bronze \$250 - \$499

***Regular Membership***

- Family \$80 - \$249
- Individual \$50 - \$79
- Business, Associations & Affiliates \$100 - \$250

*RISC is an IRS §501(c)(4) advocacy organization. Dues payments are not tax-deductible.*

Make checks payable to: RISC. Mail to RISC, 3949 Old Post Rd., P.O. Box 567, Charlestown, RI 02813