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PRESS RELEASE

RHODE ISLAND DEMOCRATS DENOUNCE REPUBLICAN NAME-CALLING; *Rhode Island Needs Solutions, Not Sound Bites, Chair Notes*

WARWICK, RI—Rhode Island Democratic Party Chairman Joseph M. McNamara today denounced recent Republican tactics and name-calling against the speaker, governor and senate president. McNamara challenged the leadership of the Republican Party to, “suspend the name-calling, which seems more focused on landing a sound bite than getting Rhode Island back on track.

“In press releases and on social media, the Republican smear machine only seems focused on creating negativity about Rhode Island. We all understand politics can create a caustic environment at times, but the leadership of the Republican Party has taken the debate back to the playground and it isn’t serving Rhode Islanders well. Instead of working together to create real solutions to the state’s problems, they continue to lob childish assaults at state’s leaders who are working hard to turn Rhode Island’s economy around. Just because the national Republican debate stage has completely eroded doesn’t mean we have embrace it back here at home,” said McNamara. “Rhode Islanders want their elected officials to solve problems and restore pride in our great state.”

“People lob insults when the facts are not on their side,” McNamara continued. “The facts are clear. For the first time in a long time, we have a governor, a speaker and a senate president who are rowing in the same direction and focused on Rhode Island’s comeback. Together, we settled the pension case. Together, we cut Medicaid costs. Together, we eliminated taxes on social security benefits; cut the corporate tax and eliminated taxes on business energy use. Together, we raised the minimum wage. And, together, we will improve the worst bridges in America while creating more than 6,000 jobs. The results speak for themselves: our unemployment rate has dropped more than any other state in the nation in the last year.”

McNamara noted that Rhode Island bridges did not deteriorate overnight and that Republican governors ran the Department of Transportation 16 out of the last 20 years. Democrats have called for big solutions to problems that have been decades in the making.

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“While Democrats are solving the problems that will stimulate Rhode Island’s comeback, what is the Republican plan? Raise the gas tax? The Republicans tax plan would hurt the middle class. Why should the mom driving to the grocery store bear the burden of fixing our bridges? Why should the college student driving to URI pay 10 cents more per gallon to fix bridges that were damaged mostly by big trucks? Why should the local landscaper pay 10 cents more per gallon in taxes? Why would we take income out of the pockets of Rhode Islanders to fix a problem that the big trucks caused?”

“What is the other Republican idea? Privatize our state roads and allow out-of-state corporations to toll as much as they like? That sounds like a terrible idea - just like their foolish idea to find the hundreds of millions in our current state budget. That plan moves money from an existing fund for transportation into a new one. This isn't robbing Peter to pay Paul. It's giving Peter back the stolen money and telling him he has double now.”

“I am a proud Rhode Islander,” stated McNamara. “I believe in the Rhode Island spirit: the burning of the Gaspee, the start of the Industrial Revolution, the conservation of our beautiful environment. Now, we need to unite as proud Rhode Islanders and work together to bring our state back. I have every confidence the voters will support the party of solutions vs. the party of sound bites.”

“One thing is for sure,” McNamara concluded. “Our state’s democratic leaders are putting wind in our sails for the first time in a long time and we will continue to work collaboratively for Rhode Island’s middle class.”

*****COVERAGE INVITED*****

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