



February 26, 2024

Subject: Support for the Establishment of the Early Childhood IDEA Task Force H-7438

Dear Members of the House Committee on Education,

On behalf of SEIU 1199NE, representing around 5,000 healthcare and service workers in Rhode Island, I write to express our strong support for the proposed legislation to establish an Early Childhood IDEA Task Force (H-7438). This initiative is crucial for developing a comprehensive financing and staffing plan for early childhood educational and developmental services for babies and young children with developmental delays and disabilities, from birth up to kindergarten entry.

The systemic challenges faced by Early Intervention providers and school districts in attracting and retaining qualified staff have led to significant waiting times for services and a decrease in the effectiveness of these programs. The establishment of this task force is a vital step towards addressing these issues, ensuring timely access to high-quality early childhood IDEA services, and improving the developmental outcomes for young children in Rhode Island.

We urge the Committee to support this essential legislation, which will pave the way for a more coherent and effective system of early childhood care and education across the state.

Sincerely,

Alex Moore

Political Director, SEIU 1199NE

319 Broadway

Providence, RI 02909