



50 Valley Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02909  
(401) 444-0600 | [www.unitedwayri.org](http://www.unitedwayri.org)



February 28, 2024  
The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara Chair,  
House Education Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 7438- An ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION- Children  
With Disabilities**

United Way of Rhode Island is writing to express its support for House Bill No. 7438 the Children With Disabilities Act. A priority of United Way of Rhode Island is to help children succeed in school through the support of high-quality education programs in early childhood, elementary, middle, secondary school and out-of-school time programs. Support for **House Bill 7438** is rooted in a comprehensive approach to bolster educational outcomes and economic opportunities through access to critical services. We support H 7438 and the appropriate adjustments to eliminate barriers to early intervention services to best support low-income and most in need youth. An increase in funding will enable more education and learning support, improve social services available and increase the quality and capacity of educational learning programs available to youth in need. In addition, H 7438 will allow local education agencies to hire on-site specialists in key academic areas focused on early intervention, strengthening literacy and math support for youth in need. We strongly support H 7438, and the efforts to increase the number of full-time certified professionals made available to students to address and support their varying needs.

All of our state's children deserve opportunities to learn in high-quality schools staffed by exemplary teachers and social workers trained to meet individualized learning and mental wellness needs. United Way of Rhode Island respectfully requests your support for the Children With Disabilities Act; and continue to work to support our youth.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cortney Nicolato".

Cortney Nicolato  
President and CEO

**Uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders.**

