

**Association of RI Administrators of Special Education: H 7438—Support**

***Sent via email to [houseeducation@rilegislature.gov](mailto:houseeducation@rilegislature.gov)***

February 28, 2024

Rep. Joseph McNamara, Chairman  
House Education Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
73 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman McNamara,

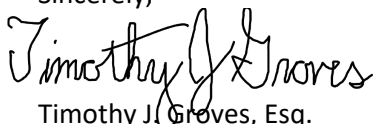
I write as legal counsel for the Association of Rhode Island Administrators of Special Education ("ARIASE") to submit this written testimony in support of H 7438. ARIASE is the lone statewide association of special education administrators in Rhode Island, and its members are passionately committed to serving students with disabilities and working collaboratively and constructively with their families to enhance their educational opportunities and outcomes.

The members of ARIASE are grateful to Representative Carson and her co-sponsors for introducing this legislation to create an inclusive task force that will collaborate to offer recommendations on how we can all work together to improve the access to and quality of the early childhood services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") in Rhode Island. ARIASE is honored and pleased to be among the diverse array of agencies and organizations that will be at the table representing the perspectives of all the stakeholders who are so committed to the successful delivery of these early childhood services to Rhode Island children from birth to kindergarten and beyond.

As an organization made up of experienced practitioners who work with students with disabilities and their families on a daily basis, ARIASE members are particularly appreciative of the obvious study, care and reflection that went into the formulation of the specific objectives that H 7438 spells out for the early childhood IDEA services task force. ARIASE shares Representative Carson's belief that a clear focus on equitable access for historically and currently marginalized populations must drive this work. We also laud the bill's champions for highlighting the need for innovative solutions to remove historically stubborn barriers to access, and for viable funding and staffing strategies to attract and retain quality professionals to implement those solutions.

The leaders of ARIASE are confident that the Rhode Island Children's Cabinet will be an effective convener and facilitator of this task force, and look forward to working with all task force members to craft recommendations and deliver interim and final reports to you, Chair McNamara, in accordance with the letter and spirit of this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Timothy J. Groves, Esq.