



RHODE ISLAND  
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AFT AFL-CIO

To: House Education Committee

From: Frank Flynn, RIFTHP, President

Date: April 10, 2024

Re: **Parents Bill of Rights**

Testimony in **Opposition** to 2024 **H 7781** (Reps. Morgan and Quattrocchi)

The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals opposes H 7781. This bill contains numerous provisions unrelated to schools, but we have concerns with the wording of some of the education-specific proposals.

As an example, H 7781 would give all parents “the right to direct the education and care of their minor children”. How can a classroom teacher with twenty-five students in a class provide an education while having twenty-five different parents directing the education of their individual children? Such broad rights are not practical in a school setting.

The bill also gives parents the right to object to curriculum material of health education classes “and other materials used in the classroom.” This puts teachers in an untenable role of trying to provide an education while giving parents the right to object to any material in any subject area for any reason.

The RIFTHP is concerned that the information provisions of this bill will put an onerous burden on public school teachers and school administrators. The role of a teacher already requires a tremendous commitment of time to plan, research, instruct, and assess each lesson daily for multiple classes or lessons every day. This is often done outside the course of the normal school day due to a limited amount of in-school planning time. We cannot support legislation that would require teachers to spend more time on administrative work than planning lessons for students.

Parent involvement is vitally important for student success. We support efforts to encourage parental involvement but urge caution in wording legislation about parental rights to avoid unintended consequences.

We urge you to oppose HB7781.

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