



Association of Independent
Colleges & Universities of Rhode Island

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April 9, 2025

The Honorable Representative McNamara
Chair, House Committee on Education
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI, 02903

Dear Chairman McNamara,

On behalf of the member institutions of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Rhode Island, I am writing to express our opposition to **House Bill 5339**, introduced by Representative O'Brien. This legislation would stipulate that until July 1, 2027, an applicant for a teaching certificate in Rhode Island would not be required to complete a standardized teacher's examination as a prerequisite to obtaining a teaching certificate. This bill was heard before the committee on March 4, 2025.

By eliminating the standardized test requirement, the qualifications would be lowered for the teaching profession and students in the K-12 setting would be short-changed. Rhode Island's education system relies on well trained and qualified teachers who have a high level of expertise in the field. Qualified teachers need not only to take an exam, but have quality training in pedagogy, classroom management, and theoretical frameworks surrounding the profession.

Another concern is the vague language in the bill regarding who is required or exempt from taking the standardized exams. The bill states that standardized examination exemption does not apply to any testing that is required as part of an accredited post-secondary teacher preparation program. RIDE requires that students graduating from teacher preparation programs take the Praxis Exam, but candidates who are on an emergency certification or alternate pathway do not have to take the exam. This brings into question the fairness of the test exemption and would threaten the enrollment in our membership's Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs).

Candidates seeking teacher certifications through the emergency or alternate pathways would not be subjected to the praxis exam. This degrades the quality of Rhode Island's sorely needed teachers and reducing the value of our state's Colleges & University's EPPs. While this well-intended bill aims to address the teacher shortage, it would undermine the quality of Rhode Island's teachers to the detriment of students across the state.

With these points in mind, AICU *Rhode Island* opposes the passage of **House Bill 5339**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. Egan", written in a cursive style.

Daniel P. Egan
President