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Ms. Cataldi
Committee Clerk
House Education Committee

4/23/2025

RE: Support of School Libraries Act H5488

Dear members of the House Education Committee,

Despite having world-class institutions of higher learning and a robust economy, Rhode Island ranks 29th for K-12 education according to Kids Count, and 36th according to U.S. News and World Report. As a parent in the Rhode Island school system, I care less about rankings and statistics, and more about kids receiving a high-quality education that will equip them for college and beyond. That is not possible without high-quality school libraries curated by professionally trained school librarians.

Consistently, over decades of studies, the best predictor of college readiness is reading widely and often, which school libraries make possible. In addition, the newer challenges of today's students — media literacy, the ability to critically evaluate information by source reliability and bias, navigating AI and the ethics of intellectual property — need school librarians to teach.

Rhode Island needs to invest in our children and young people by providing high-quality school libraries to help our students become the leaders of the future. Please pass H5488.

Thank you,

Jeanette Bradley