

Dear House Education Committee,

My name is Kaylie Hanisak, a constituent from Providence, RI, Representative District 2. I am writing in support of H 7342, an act related to Education– School Waste Recycling and Refuse Disposal.

I am an Urban Education Policy masters student at Brown University, and I recently graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a Bachelors of Science in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems. My time at Brown has allowed me to understand the systemic barriers of our education system in relation to student outcomes and success, housing, food access, and community change.

This bill has the potential to mitigate edible food from our landfills and redistribute it to our children, families, and community members. Furthermore, mandating recycling, share tables, and composting in schools to limit wasted food is necessary to make sure schools have government and community support in maintaining state efforts to decrease wasted food, feed more people, and extend the expected closure of our landfill.

Our education and food systems are not singular; these systems consistently intertwine with each other, especially when considering the health, wellbeing, and developing minds of our youth. Therefore, it is necessary for RIDE to collaboratively work with food service companies to track and report to our communities how much food is being donated and composted in each school. This is a collaborative and communal effort to improve our local food and education systems. RIDE does not have to do this effort alone and can work with community organizations, such as RI Food Policy Council or Rhode Island School Recycling Project to track compliance and support food service authorities to prevent financial penalties.

Working together and holding one another accountable is not a barrier in this bill; it is a catalyst for systemic change in Rhode Island.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kaylie Hanisak  
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District 2