



Association of Independent
Colleges & Universities of Rhode Island

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February 10, 2026

The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara
Chair, House Committee on Education
Rhode Island State House
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 7419**, introduced by Representative Giraldo. This legislation would extend teacher certifications for three to five years without a fee or penalty. This would include certifications issued by the Rhode Island Department of Education, as well as emergency certifications.

A primary concern is the decline in enrollment that our memberships' Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) are experiencing. Emergency teacher certifications add to the strain of declining enrollment and undermine the value of an accredited program. Extending these certifications would add to the strain Rhode Island EPPs are experiencing and diminish the training and qualification of the state's teachers.

Additionally, this legislation would direct the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to establish alternate and multiple pathways to obtain teaching certification. While this is well-intended measure meant to increase the number of certified teachers, it has a negative effect on Rhode Island's EPPs.

Teachers in the field require intensive training in pedagogy, content instruction, and theoretical frameworks in order to deliver the standards of education we set for Rhode Island's students. Teachers who do not go through these accredited EPPs may lack the necessary skills and practice to be effective teachers and the students end up paying the price.

Extending teacher certifications is not an effective way to address the teacher shortage and serves as a short-term solution to a long-term problem. EPPs will continue declining and Rhode Island's students will be negatively affected by the lack of qualified teachers.

With these points in mind, AICU *Rhode Island* **opposes** the passage of **House Bill 7419**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Egan".

Daniel P. Egan
President