



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

To: House Education Committee  
From: Jeremy Sencer, Field Representative  
Date: March 2, 2026  
Re: **Anti-Hazing Policy in Student Athletics**  
Testimony in Support of 2026-H 7003 (Representative McNamara, et. al.)

The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals (RIFTHP) supports H 7003, which directs the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in conjunction with the Rhode Island Interscholastic League, to establish a comprehensive statewide anti-hazing policy for student athletics.

Hazing, bullying, and harassment have no place in Rhode Island schools. Student-athletes should be able to participate in extracurricular activities in environments that are safe, respectful, and free from humiliation or abuse. This legislation appropriately establishes a clear statewide framework that promotes consistency, accountability, and prevention.

The bill's requirement for a uniform policy incorporating definitions, sanctions, education components, and acknowledgement by student athletes ensures that expectations are clearly communicated and consistently enforced. Importantly, the recognition that consent is not a defense in hazing incidents reflects best practices and reinforces student protections.

The inclusion of prevention and education components aligned with broader school climate and anti-bullying initiatives strengthens the bill's impact. Addressing hazing is not solely about discipline; it is about cultivating a culture of respect, inclusion, and student well-being across school communities.

By directing the development of transparent and consistently applied standards statewide, *H 7003* promotes student safety while providing districts and athletic programs with clear guidance.

The RIFTHP urges support of the legislation.

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