

To the House Committee on Education,

My name is **Michael Slaiger**, and I am a public school teacher in Rhode Island with over 25 years of experience teaching in Providence. I am also a former student of Providence schools and the parent of two daughters who attended Providence public schools.

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 7415 and the proposed moratorium on new charter schools.

In my school, I am currently the only full-time special education teacher serving a population with well over 40 students who have special education needs. Over the course of this school year alone, we have experienced constant student movement in and out of our building. This mobility creates an extraordinary workload in terms of evaluations, IEP development, and compliance paperwork. The administrative burden alone has grown to a level that makes it increasingly difficult to focus on direct services for students, and parent engagement.

At the same time, we are seeing students return from charter schools because those schools report they cannot meet their needs. Many of these students require significant supports, including special education services, trauma-informed care, multilingual support, and assistance related to housing instability and immigration concerns. Our school welcomes these students, but we are doing so with fewer and fewer resources.

The expansion of charter schools has diverted significant funding away from neighborhood public schools like ours. As funding leaves, the students who remain are often those with the greatest needs. Yet staffing levels and resources in our schools are at an all time low.

This situation creates a deeply inequitable system. It is not ethical to continue reducing funding and staffing in the schools serving the highest-need populations while expanding systems that are not required to serve all students at the same level.

Public schools are the backbone of our communities. If we are serious about equity and opportunity for all students, we must ensure that the schools serving the most vulnerable children have the resources and staffing necessary to meet their needs.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to support House Bill 7415 and implement a moratorium on new charter schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Slaiger